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THE CHRISTIAN PREACHER'S COMPANION

Alexander Campbell

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THE

Christian Preacher's Companion

—OR—

The Gospel Facts Sustained

BY THE TESTIMONY OF

UNBELIEVING JEWS AND PAGANS

BY ALEXANDER CAMPBELL

COLLEGE PRESS
JOPLIN, MISSOURI

CENTREVILLE, KY.
PUBLISHED FOR R. B. NEAL
1891

Printed in the United States of America

INTRODUCTION.

The proposition and the proof must necessarily be homogeneous. Mathematical propositions can only be sustained by mathematical evidence; speculative and abstract truths, by abstract reasonings; matters of fact or historical truths, by testimony; and supernatural communications, by displays of supernatural power, usually called miracles.

A miracle, indeed, may be a question of fact depending upon human testimony, and so far as it depends upon human testimony is always credible when that testimony is perfect. On perfect human testimony it must be believed, on the principle, that every effect must have an adequate cause.—For should we see a number of persons of sound understanding, radically and essentially change their manner of life, and institute a new course of action, unequivocally contrary to their natural passions and well established habits, because of an alleged display of supernatural light and power, submitted to their understanding and their senses, we would be compelled to believe them; or, to admit the existence of an effect without a cause. It will not satisfy a discriminating mind, to allege that they only *thought* they saw and heard that which essentially changed their manners and customs of life. This might be plead when testimony is imperfect.

It is admitted that either the eye or the ear, single and alone, of an individual person, may deceive him; or, perhaps (though it is scarcely admissible) that they both may in conjunction deceive him, once and again, in reference to an object of both these senses; and therefore, the wisest and most just code of criminal law promulged required *two* witnesses in a case affecting a man's life. It is, indeed, contrary to my experience, and, I presume, contrary to the experience of millions of my fellow citizens to

have been deceived by an object addressed to the eye and the ear at the same time. One may illusively at one time hear a sound, and at another, see a sight which has no real existence; but that any person, at one and the same time, ever saw a sight and heard a voice unreal, supposes an illusion of two senses, which were I to make my own experience or that of a million of my contemporaries, a rule of faith, I could never believe. But in a case of so much importance as the belief of a miracle, without weakening our argument, we are able to concede the bare possibility that one or two persons might be deceived in what they saw and heard.

But we speak of *perfect* testimony:—of a large number of witnesses, having ample and repeated opportunities for examination; of the most cautious, rational, and discriminating character; most of them first opposed to the facts which they afterwards believed and reported; and withal, having often two, frequently three, and sometimes all the senses addressed in the same miracle.* Such witnesses as these never were deceived, and not to believe them, who, on such testimony, changed their whole course of life, is to admit the chief of absurdities:—viz. an effect without a cause.

Such were the twelve Apostles. To allege that these men did not change their lives—that they did not abandon one mode of life and adopt another, diametrically opposite in every cardinal principle of human action, is to discredit the whole world, Jew, Gentile, Christian, and Barbarian of every name. And to assume that they were *honest* but *deceived* men is to assert that there is no certainty in the evidence of sense, any more than in the evidence of testimony; and, consequently, no certainty in the world!

We only allege at present, that the facts of the gospel, however supernatural and marvellous some of them may appear, are, nevertheless on the testimony which is offered, just as credible (to say the least) as the most ordinary events on the best human testimony. Our faith, indeed, primarily rests upon the testimony of Apostles and Prophets;—upon those written records called the Old and

*Such as the five common loaves and two small fishes, feeding to satiety five thousand men.

New Testaments; but our faith is also corroborated by many things intrinsic and extrinsic of the simple affirmations of Prophets and Apostles; and among those things extrinsic and rather accidental, we rank the concessions, admissions, and statements of the ancient unbelieving Jews and Gentiles.

In the following pages we offer but one argument to the modern skeptics and infidels of every school, drawn from their own church—their own party, which, in our judgment, it would be rather difficult, if not impossible, for them satisfactorily to dispose of. In this little treatise we reason only on the testimony of the enemies of the gospel. If at any time we quote from the Old or New Testament, it is only to show that our opposers—unbelieving Jews and Gentiles, either attest or explain the facts alleged from the historic and prophetic scriptures.

The design of this brief volume is to furnish all preachers, without respect to sect or party, with so many of the concessions, admissions, and statements of the distinguished original opposers of Christianity on its first appearance in the world, and during the two first centuries, as are of general credit, or of primary importance in reasoning against modern free-thinkers and unbelievers. So that the Bible and this collection of authentic documents will be all that is necessary for any person competent to preach the gospel, to prove it to be true, in the presence of the most learned and talented of the opposers of our faith in Jesus Christ, and our hope of eternal life.

Our plan shall be the following:—

1. We shall sketch from ancient history, and the works of our most learned predecessors, the prominent outlines of the biography of those unbelievers whose writings we adduce.

2. We shall then faithfully submit their testimony, always giving a fair translation of their words into our own language; or quoting such translators as have been, heretofore, generally admitted.

3. In the third place, we shall point out how many of the gospel facts may be learned or inferred from each witness adduced.

4. And finally we shall sum up the whole, and show how

many of the gospel facts and institutions can be gleaned from the most ancient unbelieving Jewish and Pagan writers alone.

The biographical sketches, and the accounts of the works of the witnesses adduced, are taken for the most part from Lardner. The testimonies themselves are quoted directly; we are responsible for all the rest.

THE

CHRISTIAN PREACHER'S COMPANION.

JOSEPHUS.

Josephus, son of Matthias, of the race of the Jewish priests, and of the first course of the four and twenty, by his mother descended from the Asmonean family, which for a considerable time had the supreme government of the Jewish nation, was born in the first year of the reign of Caligula, of our Lord 37.

He was educated together with Matthias, who was his own brother by father and mother, and made such proficiency in knowledge that when he was about fourteen years of age the high priests and some of the principal men of the city came to consult him about the right interpretation of things of the law. In the sixteenth year of his age he retired into the wilderness, where he lived three years an abstemious course of life, in the company of Banus. Having fully acquainted himself with the principles of the three sects, the Pharisees, the Sadducees, and the Essenes, he determined to follow the rule of the Pharisees. And being now nineteen years of age, he began to act in public life.

Felix, when procurator of Judea, sent some priests of his acquaintance, for a trifling offense, to Rome, to be tried before Cæsar. Josephus, hearing that they behaved well, resolved to go to Rome to plead their cause: but he had a bad voyage; the ship was wrecked; and out of six hundred persons, not more than eighty were saved. Soon after his arrival at Rome, he became acquainted with Aliturius, a Jew by birth, but a stage-player, in favor with Nero. By him

he was introduced to Poppea, the emperor's wife; by whose interest he procured that the priests should be set at liberty. Josephus, who never omits what may be to his own honor, adds, that besides that favor, he also received from Poppea many valuable presents; and then he returned home. This voyage was made, as he says, in the 26th year of his age, which must have been in the 62nd or 63rd year of Christ.

Upon his return to Judea he found things in great confusion, many being elevated with hopes of advantage by a revolt from the Romans. He says he did what lay in his power to prevent it, though in vain.

Soon after the beginning of the war, in the year of Christ 66 (when he must have been himself about thirty years of age), he was sent from Jerusalem to command in Galilee; where, having ordered matters as well as he could, and made the best preparations for war, by fortifying the cities in case of an attack from the Romans, he was at length shut up in the city of Jotapata: which, after a vigorous defense, and a siege of seven and forty days, was taken by Vespasian, on the first day of July, in the 13th year of Nero and the 67th of our Lord.

When that city was taken, by Vespasian's order strict search was made for Josephus; for if that general was once taken, he reckoned that the greatest part of the war would be over. However, he hid himself in a deep cavern, the opening of which was not easily discovered above ground. Here he met with forty persons of eminence, who had concealed themselves, and had with them provisions enough for several days. On the third day the Roman soldiers seized a woman that had been with them. She made a discovery of the place where they were; whereupon Vespasian sent two tribunes, inviting him to come up, with assurances that his life should be preserved. Josephus, however, refused. Vespasian therefore sent a tribune, named Nicanor, well known to Josephus, with the like assurances. Josephus, after some hesitation, was then willing to surrender himself. But the men who were with him exclaimed against it, and were for killing him and themselves rather than come alive into the hands of the Romans. Hereupon he made a long speech unto them,

showing that it was not lawful for men to kill themselves, and that it was rather a proof of pusillanimity than courage: but all without effect. He then proposed an expedient; which was that they should cast lots, two by two, who should die first. He who had the second lot should kill the first, and the next him, and so on, and the last should kill himself. It happened that Josephus and another were preserved to the last lot. When all the rest were killed, he without much difficulty persuaded that person to yield up himself to the Romans. So they two escaped with their lives.

When Vespasian went to Rome, Josephus continued to be with Titus, and was present at the siege of Jerusalem, and saw the ruin of his city and country.

After the war was over, when Titus went to Rome, he went with him; and Vespasian allotted him an apartment in the same house in which himself had lived before he came to the empire: he also made him a citizen of Rome, and gave him an annual pension; and continued to show him great respect so long as he lived. His son Titus, who succeeded him, showed him the like regard. And afterwards Domitian, and his wife Domitia, did him many kind offices.

The following is a list of the works of Josephus:—

The first is the History of the Jewish War, and the taking of Jerusalem, in seven books. In which work he goes back to the times of Antiochus Epiphanes and the Maccabees. In the preface he says that he first wrote it in the language of his own country, for the sake of such as lived in Parthia, Babylonia, Arabia, and other parts; and afterwards published it in Greek for the benefit of others, which is what we have: it is generally supposed to have been published by him in the seventy-fifth year of Christ, and the thirty-eighth year of his own age. He professes to have written with great fidelity: and for the truth of his history appeals to Vespasian and Titus, and King Agrippa, then living. He presented it to Vespasian and Titus; which last not only desired the publication of it, but with his own hand signed the book, that it might be reckoned authentic.

The Jewish Antiquities, in twenty books, or the history of the Jews from the creation of the world to the twelfth

year of Nero, in which the war began. This work was finished by him in the fifty-sixth year of his own life, in the third year of the reign of Domitian, and the year of Christ ninety-three.

To this work is subjoined, as a part of it, or an appendix to it, his Life, written by himself some time afterwards.

After the several above-mentioned works, he published another work in two books, titled, Of the Antiquity of the Jews against Apion; being a vindication of the Jewish people against the calumnies of that Egyptian author.

We now proceed to the *testimony* of Josephus, and I shall make such extracts as will give a fair miniature view of the service which he has unconsciously and involuntarily rendered the Christian cause. This testimony we shall arrange under the following distinct heads:

No. 1. *The alleged testimony of Josephus concerning Jesus.*

"At that time lived Jesus, a wise man, if he may be called a man; for he performed many wonderful works. He was a teacher of such men as received the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him many Jews and Gentiles. This was the Christ. And when Pilate, at the instigation of the chief men among us, had condemned him to the cross, they who before had conceived an affection for him did not cease to adhere to him. For on the third day he appeared to them alive again, the divine prophets having foretold these and many other wonderful things concerning him. And the sect of the Christians, so called from him, subsists to this time." (*Antiquities, Book* 18, *chapter* iii., *section* 3)

Though this passage is found in every copy of Josephus now extant, and was twice quoted by Eusebius early in the fourth century, and by Jerome and Sosomon after him; yet, because it is not quoted by any writer previous to the year 315 who has come down to us, not even by those who were conversant with the works of Josephus, and who had occasion to quote this passage, had it been in the copies which they saw; such as Origen, Tertullian, Justin Martyr, &c., and inasmuch as it was wanting in some copies of Josephus, seen by Photius in the ninth century; and because it interrupts the course of the narration where it appears, and seems forced and unnatural for an unbelieving Jew, it has been rejected by the laborious and learned Lardner and

some other learned men; I shall not place it amongst my premises, in the facts and documents which I am about to offer.

No. 2. *The alleged testimony of Josephus concerning James, the brother of him who is called Christ.*

"The emperor having been informed of the death of Festus, sent Albinus to be præfect in Judea. And the king (meaning Agrippa the younger) took away the high-priesthood from Joseph, and bestowed that dignity upon the son of Ananus, who was also named Ananus. This younger Ananus, who, as we said just now, was made high-priest, was haughty in his behavior, and very enterprising: and moreover he was of the sect of the Sadducees, who, as we have also observed before, are above all other Jews severe in their judicial sentences. This then being the temper of Ananus, and he thinking he had a fit opportunity because Festus was dead, and Albinus was yet upon the road, calls a council of judges; and, bringing before them James the brother of him who is called Christ, and some others, he accused them as transgressors of the laws, and had them stoned to death. But the most moderate men of the city, who were also reckoned most skillful in the laws, were offended at this proceeeding. They therefore sent privately to the king (Agrippa before mentioned), entreating him to send orders to Ananus no more to attempt such things; and some went away to meet Albinus, who was coming from Alexandria, and put him in mind that Ananus had no right to call a council without his leave. Albinus, approving of what he had said, wrote to Ananus in much anger, threatening to punish him for what he had done; and king Agrippa took away from him the high-priesthood, after that he had enjoyed it three months, and put in Jesus the son of Damnæus." (*Ant.*, *B.* 20, *c.* viii., *s.* 1.)

Though Eusebius also quotes this passage in his Ecclesiastical History, and though found in the copies which Photius saw in the ninth century; yet, because that part of it concerning the manner of the death of James, corresponds not with the account given by Hegesippus, a learned Jewish believer and writer in the second century, who makes James die at, or near, the temple, in a tumult of the people; and because Jerome, Epiphanius and others

of the fourth century, concur with the account given by Hegesippus, and for some other reasons, which render this passage doubtful, so much of it at least as respects the manner and circumstances of the death of James, and the naming of Christ, I chose not to admit as genuine. Lardner and other learned antiquarians, whose judgment I can not but respect, doubt its genuineness; and as I have no need for any documents of a spurious or doubtful character, I will not place it amongst my corroborative facts and documents.

No. 3. *Josephus' testimony concerning John the Baptist.*

"About this time there happened a difference between Aretas king of Petrea and Herod upon this occasion. Herod the tetrarch had married the daughter of Aretas, and lived a considerable time with her. But, in a journey he took to Rome, he made a visit to Herod his brother, though not by the same mother. Here falling in love with Herodias, wife of the same Herod, daughter of their brother Aristobulus, and sister of Agrippa the Great, he ventured to make proposals of marriage to her. She not disliking them, they agreed together at that time, that when he was returned from Rome she would go and live with him. And it was one part of the contract, that Aretas' daughter should be put away. This was the beginning of the difference; and there being also some disputes about the limits of their territories, a war arose between Aretas and Herod. And in a battle fought by them Herod's whole army was defeated.

"But some of the Jews were of opinion that God had suffered Herod's whole army to be destroyed as a just punishment on him for the death of John, called the Baptist. For Herod had killed him, who was a just man, and had called upon the Jews to be baptized, and to practice virtue, exercising both justice toward men and piety toward God. For so would baptism be acceptable to God, if they made use of it, not for the expiation of their sins, but for the purity of the body, the mind being first purified by righteousness. And many coming to him (for they were wonderfully taken with his discourses), Herod was seized with apprehensions, lest his authority should be led into sedition against him; for they seemed capable of undertaking anything by his direction. Herod therefore thought it better

to take him off before any disturbance happened, than to run the risk of affairs, and of repenting when it should be too late to remedy disorders. Being taken up upon this suspicion of Herod, and being sent bound to the castle of Macherus, just mentioned, he was slain there. The Jews were of opinion that the destruction of Herod's army was a punishment upon him for that action, God being displeased with him." (*Ant.*, *B.* 18, *c.* v., *s.* 1.)

This we receive as genuine. It is quoted even by Origen, and in debate with the celebrated Epicurean philosopher Celsus, who wrote against the Christians. It is quoted by Eusebius in his Ecclesiastical History, and by Jerome. It was read in Josephus by Photius, and has been regarded genuine by the most distinguished antiquarians and critics.

Josephus in this passage alludes to various facts in the testimonies of the Evangelists. Herod the Great, under whose reign Jesus was born, and by whom the babes of Bethlehem were slaughtered, was the father of a large family by at least nine wives. Herod the tetrarch was one of his sons, whose brother by another mother is here called *Herod*, and by the Evangelists *Philip*, as it was then not unusual to have two children of one name. This Philip was a private citizen, not distinguished by any office, and his wife Herodias was easily induced to repair to Rome and to consort with the tetrarch of Galilee, the half brother of her living husband. The difference growing out of this amour and breach of nuptial faith, occasioned the murder of the Baptist. In this narrative, John's character, office, success, and the occasion of his death, are pretty fairly and fully stated. He is represented as a reformer—a just man—and preaching baptism for purification.

The Evangelists say: "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Josephus, in his orthodoxy and zeal for the credit of John, gives his gloss of this fact, and differs so far from the Evangelists, as to represent his baptism for the purification of the body. But all must see the harmony of his testimony with that of the Evangelists, concerning John's ministry. As to the manner of his death, both agree that he fell by the hands of Herod, and was killed in prison.

The Evangelists detail the particulars; Josephus does not, probably through fear of offending those as criminal in such matters as Herod,

No. 4. *The political government of Judea.*

Josephus can not be quoted on this subject, unless we should transcribe so much of his history as reaches from the time of Herod the Great to the death of Vespasian. It can only be affirmed, and where there is no debate a simple affirmation is enough, that all that is said in the New Testament relative to any of the great persons or events in Rome, Judea, Galilee, Syria, or Samaria, is amply sustained by Josephus. Herod the king, recognized as Herod the Great, Archelaus, Agrippa, Herod the tetrarch of Gallee, Philip the tetrarch of Iturea and of the region of Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, Herod (Philip) and his wife Herodias, Bernice, Drusilla, Pontius Pilate, Felix, Portius Festus, and the emperors Augustus, Tiberius, Claudius, are mentioned by Josephus in perfect harmony with all that is said of them, as to time, place, and administration, in the Christian books. If everything said of these persons, either in Josephus or the New Testament, is not identically the same, it must be confessed that Josephus does very much to relieve the four Evangelists, and explains for them most satisfactorily various matters to which they only allude, and more than once reconciles seeming contradictions which, without him, could not be done so much to the satisfaction and conviction of the skeptical.

No. 5. *Extract from a speech of Titus, general of the Roman army, addressed to the Jews.*

"You have never ceased rebelling since Pompey made a conquest of your country: and at length you have declared open war against the Romans. Our kindness to you has encouraged your enmity against us; who have let you live in your own country in peace and quietness. In the first place we gave you your own country to live in, and set over you kings of your own nation; and farther, we preserved to you your own laws; and withal we permitted you to live either by yourselves, or among others, as you liked best. And, which is the greatest favor of all, we have given you leave to gather up that tribute which you pay to God, together with all such other gifts as are dedicated to

him. Nor have we called those to account who have carried such donations, nor given them any obstruction: till at length you have become richer than ourselves, even when you were our enemies, and you have made preparations for the war against us with our own money." (*Wars of the Jews, B.* 6, *c. vi., s.* 2.)

So far as these remarks, quoted by and from Josephus, respect the kindness and magnanimity of the Romans towards the Jews, in setting over them first kings of their own nation, permitting them to possess their own country, laws, and religion, without interference, they harmonize with every hint and allusion to the subject in the sacred writings.

No. 6. *The ambiguous oracle.*

"But that which principally encouraged them to the war, was an ambiguous oracle, found also in their sacred writings, that about this time some one of their country should obtain the empire of the world. This they understood to belong to themselves; and many of the wise men were mistaken in their judgment about it: for the oracle intended the government of Vespasian, who was first proclaimed emperor in Judea." (*Wars, &c., B.* 6, *c. v., s.* 4.)

Two Roman historians, of whom we shall hereafter speak more particularly, viz., Tacitus and Suetonius, expressly quote or allude to this oracle. It therefore deserves special attention. It is neither more nor less than the current interpretation of the ancient prophecies, than the common conviction of all Judea, and of the Jews in foreign nations —then familiarly expressed everywhere, during the last forty years of the Jewish state;—that a new king from Judea was to gain the government of the human race.

Persuaded of the truth of this oracle, then a part of the national faith of the Jews, and excited by its hopes, they, as our historian repeatedly affirms, eagerly engaged in all their last wars, anticipating an immediate deliverance from the Roman yoke.

But now that I see Josephus turn sycophant and compliment Vespasian at the expense of the faith and hope of his own nation, and make him the great deliverer that was to come out of Judea, I can, to myself at least, satisfactorily explain his silence concerning Jesus of Nazareth. When

we see Josephus name all the *political* persons mentioned in the New Testament, and distinctly notice Herod's speech, his splendid robes, the idolatry of the people, and his sudden death, as recorded by Luke in his Acts of the Apostles; when I see various matters, minute as these, such as the death of John the Baptist, stated by this author, it is impossible, in my judgment, for any one acquainted with his works, or the profane history of those times, to suppose him ignorant of the fame of Jesus of Nazareth.

The philosophy of this remarkable silence (if so be the passages which name Jesus and James, marked as spurious, are really so), doubtless is — that the whole subject was so mortifying to his pride, and so difficult to explain away, he concluded not to introduce it at all into his works. In this view his silence proves more than could those passages already rejected, even if admitted to be genuine by all the world. That he knew of the fame of Jesus, at least as well as Tacitus and Suetonius, no man can deny; and this admitted, his passing in silence the whole history of his wonderful life and death, fully proves that he was more perplexed and embarrassed to dispose of this person and his cause, than of any other person or incident in the history of his nation.

This, however, is not the only instance of this expressive silence found in the works of Josephus. Matters greatly derogatory to the honor of his nation are occasionally slurred in the same manner. The history of the molten calf, and all the incidents connected with it, are passed in silence, while professing to give a faithful history of all things found in the sacred records of his own nation.

Concerning this oracle, a more particular notice will be taken when examining the testimony of Tacitus.

No. 7. *Various testimonies of Josephus, corroborative of the Christian faith; and expressly declarative of the truth of the predictions of Moses and Jesus concerning the calamities which should befall that nation, its city and temple, because of their national sins.*

Whatever importance may be attached to the preceding extracts from Josephus, and to the various other matters found in his works, just as pertinent to the Christian

scriptures as those quoted, we hold them very subordinate when compared with the passages we are now about to quote from him.

The final doom of the nation, the city, the temple, is distinctly foretold by Jesus; and indeed Moses, fifteen hundred years before the Messiah, sketched a very bold and full outline of the last days of that nation. These clear, minute and ample predictions left nothing to ingenuity or to conjecture. They are plain and unequivocal as the records of history. We only want the evidence of their accomplishment. Apostles or Evangelists could not so satisfactorily have given such evidence of the fulfillment of these predictions had they lived to see them every word accomplished; because in this case the testimony of a Jewish historian, present in all the scenes of the last days, is more convincing than that of a Christian historian, evangelist, or apostle could be, especially to that class whom we have now before us. There is no apprehension of any collusion or private understanding between Moses and our historian; between Jesus and Josephus,

The greatest difficulty is in making a judicious selection. The predictions are so replete with specifications, and the incidents registered by our historian so numerous, that we are in danger of being grievously prolix, if we attempt a full display of every particular; and if we abridge, and only instance a few of the more striking, we may fail to select those best adapted to the peculiar genius of our readers. Upon the whole, we feel disposed to hazard the latter; and shall therefore hasten to select a few of the more rare and prominent features in the predictions of Moses and Jesus.

A few sentences from the valedictory address of Moses to the nation on the border of the promised land, furnish as it were the text for many pages in the history of the wars of the Jews.

"The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the ends of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor show favor to the young. And he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be destroyed; which also shall not leave thee either corn,

wine, or oil, or the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the Lord thy God hath given thee. And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee: so that the man that is tender among you, and very delicate, his eye shall be evil towards his brother, and towards the wife of his bosom, and towards the remnant of his children which he shall leave: so that he will not give to any of them of the flesh of his children whom he shall eat: because he hath nothing left him in the siege, and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates. The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom and toward her son, and toward her daughter, and toward her young one that cometh out from between her feet, and toward her children which she shall bear; for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates; if thou wilt not observe to do the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, the Lord thy God" (Deut. xxviii. 49–58).

Here are several particulars which, according to Josephus, literally and truly met in the last days of this people.

1. "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far; from the ends of the earth." Nations generally fall by their neighbors; but this nation was not to fall, and it did not fall, by any of its neighbors. A Roman army with its auxiliaries horse and foot, amounting to about 60,000 men, besides servants, drawn together, some of them of the legions that fought in Britain, and some that fought in Africa, of families and nations remote, compose the army congregated against the cities of Judah. *

2. "As the eagle flieth." It is well known that it was under the symbol of the eagle that the Roman army fought.

* Wars of the Jews, B. 8, c. i., s. 3, 4; c. iv.; c. vi., 1; c. vii., 1., s. 3.

This bird of prey was a very suitable ensign for that people.

"A nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand." Had the Syrians, or Persians, or any of their immediate neighbors been designed, they might have understood their speech; but Moses, seeing through the long vista of fifteen centuries, foretold that a people speaking a language unknown in Judea, should be the instrument of their destruction. Josephus alludes to the difficulties that arose from the Roman language being unintelligible to the Jews.

"A nation of a fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old nor show favor to the young." All historians, as well as Josephus, award this character to the Romans.

5. "They shall eat the fruit of thy land," &c. It is unnecessary to quote many passages from Josephus to show that in the taxes imposed by the Romans, and in the depredations of a war of more than *four* years, the fruits of Judea were plundered and eaten by the Romans. It is usual for this historian, in dilating upon the subjugation of city after city, to say of this commander, and then of that, "He then plundered and burnt the city"—He allowed the soldiers to seize as plunder all good things." (*Wars of the Jews*, *B.* 2, 3.)

6. "And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls in which thou trustedst are brought down." Josephus very particularly records the sieges and desolations of the principal cities of the Jews; such as the siege and fall of Jotapata (*Book* 3, *c. vii.*); the capture of Joppa and surrender of Tiberias (*B.* 3, *c. ix.*) the capture and destruction of Tarrichae (*c. x.*); the siege and desolation of Gamala (*B.* 4, *c. i.*); the surrender of Gischala (*c. ii.*); the siege and capture of Gadara (*B.* 4, *c. ix.*), &c., &c.

7. "Thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the Lord thy God hath given thee, in the siege and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee." The detail of a single incident during the siege of Jerusalem, found in B. 6, c. iii., s. 4, ought to satisfy all parties on this subject.

"There was a certain woman that dwelt beyond Jordan; her name was Mary; her father was Eleazar, of the village

Bethsebub, which signifies *the House of Hyssop*. She was eminent for her family and her wealth, and had fled away to Jerusalem, with the rest of the multitude, and was besieged therein at this time. The other effects of this woman had been already seized upon, such I mean as she had brought with her out of Perea, and removed to the city. What she had treasured up besides, as also what food she had contrived to save, had also been carried off by the rapacious guards, who came every day running into her house for that purpose. This put the poor woman into a very great passion; and by the frequent reproaches and imprecations she cast at these rapacious villains, she had provoked them to anger against her; but none of them, either out of the indignation she had raised against herself, or out of commiseration of her case, would take away her life; and if she found any food she perceived that her labors were for others, and not for herself; and it was now become impossible for her any way to find any more food, while the famine pierced through her very bowels and marrow, when also her passion was fired to a degree beyond the famine itself; nor did she consult with anything but her passion and the necessity she was in. She then attempted a most unnatural thing, and snatching up her son, who was a child sucking at her breast, she said, 'O thou miserable infant! for whom shall I preserve thee in this war, this famine, this sedition? As to the war with the Romans, if they preserve our lives we must be slaves. This famine also will destroy our lives before that slavery comes upon us. Yet are the seditious rogues more terrible than both the other. Come on; be thou my food, and be thou a fury to these seditious varlets, and a by-word to the world, which is all that is now wanting to complete the calamities of the Jews.' As soon as she had said this, she slew her son, and then roasted him, and ate the one-half of him, and kept the other half by her, concealed. Upon this the seditious came in presently, and smelling the horrid scent of this food, they threatened her that they would cut her throat immediately if she did not show them what food she had gotten ready. She replied that 'she had saved a very fine portion of it for them;' and withal uncovered what was left of her son. Hereupon they were

seized with horror and amazement of mind, and stood astonished at the sight, when she said to them, 'This is mine own son, and what hath been done was my own doing. Come, eat this food, for I have eaten of it myself. Do you pretend to be either more tender than a woman or more compassionate than a mother? But if you be so scrupulous, and do abominate this my sacrifice, as I have eaten the one half, let the rest be reserved for me also.' After which those men went out trembling, being never so much affrighted at anything as they were at this, and with some difficulty they left the rest of that meat to the mother. Upon which the whole city was full of this horrid action immediately: and while every body laid this miserable case before their own eyes, they trembled, as if this unheard of action had been done by themselves. So those that were distressed by the famine were very desirous to die, and those already dead were esteemed happy, because they had not lived long enough either to hear or see such miseries."

Let the reader with these *seven* specifications in his eye, selected from a single section of the predictions of Moses, written more than fifteen hundred years before they happened, read by the Jews, Chaldeans, Samaritans, Persians, and Greeks, centuries before the time of Josephus—examine his seven books of the wars of the Jews, from A. D. 66 to 70, and carefully compare these details with the predictions; then let him say whether anything out of the Bible like this can be found in all the annals of time: and whether it were possible for any human being, without the inspiration of Omniscience, to foretell with such exactness so many incidents meeting in the final destination of any one people! Josephus, a Jew, and not a Christian, is our witness in this case, and a sufficient witness of the inspiration of Moses, by the facts which he narrates, signed, too, by *the hand of Titus, a Roman emperor.*

But in the seven books he records many other facts foretold by Jesus, as peculiar and worthy of remark as those already adduced from the writings of Moses, which also signalize the fall of Jerusalem, the temple and the nation. A few examples of these shall be given, rather as a specimen, than as a summary of all that may be gleaned from his pages.

1. Jesus said, "I am come in my Father's name, and you receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him you will receive" (John v. 43). "There will arise false Christs,* and false prophets, and will *show* [not work] great signs and wonders, insomuch that, even were it possible, they would deceive the very elect" (Matt. xxiv. 24). "They will deceive many." Hear the testimony of Josephus on these predictions relative to the destruction of Jerusalem.

"Whilst Fadus was procurator of Judea, a certain impostor called Theudas † persuaded a very great multitude, taking their effects along with them, to follow him to the river Jordan: assuring them that he was a prophet, and that, causing the river to divide at his command, he would give them an easy passage over; by such speeches he deceived many. But Fadus was far from suffering them to go on in their madness; for he sent out a troop of horse, who, coming upon them unexpectedly, slew many, and took many prisoners. Theudas himself was among the last mentioned. They cut off his head and brought it to Jerusalem. These things happened in Judea whilst Cuspius Fadus was procurator."

"But affairs in Judea went on continually growing worse and worse. The country was again filled with robbers and impostors, who deceived the people; but Felix time after time apprehended and put to death many of them. And indeed, by means of the crimes committed by the robbers, the city was filled with all sorts of impiety; and impostors and deceivers persuaded the people to follow them into the wilderness; where, as they said, they should see manifest wonders and signs performed by the providence of God. And many, hearkening unto them, at length suffered the punishment of their folly: for Felix fetched them back and punished them. About the same time there came a man out of Egypt to Jerusalem, who said he was a prophet; and having persuaded a good number of the meaner sort of people to follow him to the mount of Olives, he told

* "False Christs." All pretenders to a divine mission for the purpose of delivering the Jews from the Roman yoke, fill up the character of a false Christ. For that was the current acceptation of the word Christ in Judea among the Jews.

† That Theudas is different from him mentioned by Gamaliel, Acts v. 36, Vol. i., B. ii., c. vii.

them that thence they should see the walls of Jerusalem fall down at his command, and promised through them to give them entrance into the city. But Felix being informed of these things, ordered his soldiers to their arms; and marching out of Jerusalem with a large body of horse and foot, he fell upon the Egyptian, and killed four hundred of them, and took two hundred prisoners; but the Egyptian, getting out of the fight, escaped." (*Antiq.*, *b.* 20, *c. viii.*, *s.* 5, 6.)

"Beside them there was another body of wicked men, whose hands indeed were cleaner, but whose intentions were as impious; who disturbed the happy state of the city no less than those murderers. For deceivers and impostors, under a pretence of divine inspiration, aiming at changes and innovations, made the people mad; and induced them to follow them into the wilderness, pretending that God would there give them signs and wonders. Felix judging these proceedings to be no less than the beginning of a revolt, sent out his soldiers, both horse and foot, and destroyed great numbers of them." (*Wars of the Jews*, *b.* 2, *c. xiii.*, *s.* 4.)

"Impostors, who spake lies in the name of God, deceived this miserable people. They neither attended to nor believed the manifest signs fore-signifying the coming desolation: but like infatuated men who have neither eyes to see, nor minds to perceive, they neglected the divine denunciations." (*Wars, &c.*, *b.* 6, *c. v.*, *s.* 3.)

2. A sign of the approaching calamities in Judea is given by Jesus in these words: "When you see the abomination of desolation stand in the holy places, then let those in Judea flee to the mountains" (Mark xiii. 4).

It is only necessary to the understanding of Jesus and Josephus to remark that "the abomination that maketh desolate," or "of desolation," is the Roman armies with their eagles or ensigns. And as they worshiped those eagles carried at the head of their armies, in the scripture language they are called, "*an abomination;*" "standing in the holy places," or "where it ought not," alluding to the temple, intimates the cause or near approach of the war.

A striking instance of this, Josephus gives: "Pilate, the prefect of Judea, sending his army from Cesarea, and

putting them into winter quarters at Jerusalem, brought the carved images of Cæsar, which are in the ensigns, into the city, in violation of the Jewish laws; since our law forbids the making of images. For which reason the former governors were wont to come into the city with ensigns destitute of these ornaments. Pilate was the first who set up images in Jerusalem: and he did it privately, the army making their entrance in the night time; but, as soon as people knew it, they went in a large body to Cesarea, making earnest supplications that the images might be removed.———And at length Pilate gave orders for bringing back the images from Jerusalem to Cesarea." (*Antiq.*, *b.* 18., *c.* iii.. *s.* 1.)

3. "Wars and rumors of wars" (Matt. xxiv. 5). "At Cesarea there had long been contentions between the Jewish people and the other inhabitants. And in one hour's time more than twenty thousand Jews were destroyed, and all Cesarea was at once emptied of its Jewish inhabitants. Some fled, whom Florus caught, and sent them bound to the gallies; at which the whole nation was enraged. They therefore divided themselves into several parties, and laid waste the villages of the Syrians, and their neighboring cities, Philadelphia, Sebonitis, Gerasa, Pella, and Scythopolis: and after them Gadara and Hippos: and falling upon Gaulanitis, some cities they demolished there, others they set on fire. Then they went to Kedessa, belonging to the Syrians, and to Ptolemais, and Caba, and Cesarea. Nor was Sebaste or Ascalon able to withstand the violence with which they were attacked. When they had burnt these to the ground, they demolished Anthedon and Gaza. Many also of the villages round about these cities were plundered; and an immense slaughter was made of the men found in them."

"The Syrians destroyed not a less number of the Jews: so that the disorders all over Syria were terrible. For every city was divided into parties armed against each other; and the safety of the one depended upon the destruction of the other. The days were spent in slaughter, and the nights in terrors, which were the worst of the two. It was common to see cities filled with dead bodies, lying unburied, those of old men mixed with infants, all

dead and scattered about promiscuously, and women without covering for their nakedness."

"At Scythopolis the contention was carried so far that above thirteen thousand Jews were killed."

"After that, other cities also rose up against the Jews that were among them. They of Ascalon slew two thousand and five hundred; they of Ptolemais two thousand, and put many others in prison. The Tyrians acted in like manner; as did also Hippos and Gadara and divers other cities of Syria."

"At Alexandria fifty thousand lay dead in heaps; nor would the remainder have been spared if they had not petitioned for mercy."

"Not long after that, the men of Damascus having got the Jewish inhabitants into the place of exercise, they came upon them unarmed, and slew ten thousand in an hour's time." (*Wars of the Jews*, *b.* 2, *c.* xviii., *s*, 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8.)

4. "Fearful sights and grave signs shall be from heaven," "signs in the sun—in the moon—in the stars; on earth perplexity—distress of nations" (Luke xxi. 25).

"There was a star, a comet resembling a sword, which stood over the city and continued for a year. And before the rebellion, and before the war broke out, when the people were come together in great multitudes to the feast of unleavened bread, on the eighth day of the month of April, at the ninth hour of the night, so great a light shone around the altar and the temple that it seemed to be bright day; which light continued for half an hour. This, to the unskillful, seemed to be a good sign; but, by the sacred scribes, it was judged to portend what has since happened. And at the same festival a heifer, as she was led by the high-priest to be sacrificed, brought forth a lamb in the midst of the temple. Moreover, the eastern gate of the inner court of the temple, which was of brass, and very heavy, which was not without difficulty shut in the evening by twenty men, and rested upon a basis armed with iron, and was fastened with bolts that went deep into the floor, which was made of one entire stone, was seen to open of its own accord at the sixth hour of the night; whereupon they who kept watch at the temple went to

the captain and told of it. He then came thither, and not without difficulty had it shut again. This also appeared to the vulgar a good sign; as if thereby God opened to them the gate of happiness. But the wiser men concluded that the security of the temple was gone, and that the gate was opened for the advantage of their enemies; and they said it was a signal of the desolation that was coming upon them. Beside these, a few days after that festival, on the one-and-twentieth day of May, there appeared a wonderful phenomenon, almost exceeding belief; and the account of it might seem fabulous if it had not been related by those who saw it, and if the following events had not been answerable to such signs: for before sunset, chariots and troops in armor were seen carried upon the clouds surrounding the city. And at the festival which we call Pentecost, as the priests were going by night into the inner court of the temple, as their custom was, to perform their ministrations, they first felt, as they said, a shaking, accompanied with a noise, and after that a sound, as of a multitude, saying, 'Let us remove hence.' But which is still more awful, there was one Jesus, son of Ananus, of a low condition, and a countryman, who four years before the war began, when the city enjoyed profound peace and flowing prosperity, came up to the festival, in which it is the custom of us all to make tabernacles, who on a sudden began to cry out in the temple: 'A voice from the east, a voice from the west, a voice from the four winds, a voice against Jerusalem and the temple, a voice against the bridegrooms and brides, a voice against the whole people.' This was his cry, as he went about both day and night, in all the lanes of the city. Some of the chief men were offended at this ill-boding sound, and, taking him up, laid many stripes upon him, and had him beaten severely. Yet he said not a word for himself, nor made any peculiar complaint to them that beat him; but went on repeating the same words that he had said before. Hereupon the magistrates, thinking it to be something more than ordinary, as indeed it was, brought him before the Roman governor; where he was whipped until his bones were laid bare. All which he bore without shedding any tears or making any supplications: but with a mournful voice at

every stripe, cried out: 'Woe unto Jerusalem.' Albinus, the governor, asked him who he was, and whence he came, and why he uttered those words. To all which he made no answer, but continued making his mournful denunciations to the city. Albinus, thinking him to be mad, dismissed him. And thenceforward, to the time of the war, he did not go to any of the citizens; nor was he seen speaking to any; but only went on with his mournful denunciation, as if it had been his premeditated vow, 'Woe, woe to Jerusalem.' He did not give ill language to those who beat him, as many did frequently; nor did he thank those who gave him food; but went on repeating to all the doleful presage. But especially at festivals his cry was the loudest. And so it continued for seven years and five months, without his growing hoarse, or being tired therewith, till he saw his presage fulfilled in the siege; then he ceased; for going round upon the wall, with his utmost force he cried out: 'Woe, woe once more, to the city, and to the people, and to the temple.' And then at last he added; 'Woe, woe to myself also.' At which instant there came a stone out of one of the engines that smote him, killing him immediately: and whilst he was uttering these mournful presages, he gave up the ghost." (*Wars, etc., b.* 6, *c.* v., *s.* 3.)

5. "They shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive unto all nations" (Luke xxi. 24).

"The number of those that were taken captive during the whole war was computed to be ninety and seven thousand; and the number of those who perished during the siege, eleven hundred thousand. The greater part of them were indeed of the same nation, but not the inhabitants of the city. For they were come up from all the country to the festival of unleavened bread, and were on a sudden shut in by the army; which occasioned so great a straitness that there came on a pestilential disorder, and then a famine, which was more severe." (*Wars, etc., b.* 6, *c.* vi., *s.* 3).

6. "And they shall lay thee [Jerusalem] even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke xix. 44).

"Now as soon as the army had no more people to slay or to plunder, because there remained none to be the objects of their fury (for they would not have spared any, had there remained any other such work to be done), Cæsar gave orders that they should now demolish the entire city and temple, but should leave as many of the towers standing as were of the greatest eminency, that is, Phasaelus, Hippicus, and Mariamne, and so much of the wall as enclosed the city on the west side. This wall was spared, in order to afford a camp for such as were to lie in garrison, as were the towers also spared, in order to demonstrate to posterity what kind of a city it was, and how well fortified, which the Roman valor had subdued; but for all the rest of the wall, it was so thoroughly laid even with the ground by those that dug it up to the foundation, that there was left nothing to make those that came thither believe it had ever been inhabited. This was the end Jerusalem came to by the madness of those that were for innovations; a city otherwise of great magnificence, and of mighty fame among all mankind. (*Wars, &c., b.* 7, *c. i., s.* 1.)

7. "This generation [whether race or age] shall not pass away until all these things be fulfilled" (Matt. xxiv. 34).

Josephus informs us the war began in the second year of the government of Gessius Florus, who succeeded Albinus, successor of Portius Festus, in the month of May, 12th year of the Emperor Nero, and the 17th of King Agrippa, mentioned Acts xxvi., in the year of our Lord 66.* The temple was burnt on the 10th of August, (in the year of Christ 70), the same day and month in which the first temple was burnt by the king of Babylon.† The city was taken on the 8th September, in the second year of the reign of Vespasian, A. D. 70. This war lasted four years and four months—the siege of Jerusalem five months from the 14th of April to the 8th of September, 70:—that is about 36 years after the death of the Messiah.

These are but few of the chief points stated by Josephus, exactly and literally verifying and completing the predictions of Jesus concerning the final catastrophe of the nation, as fully narrated by Josephus, as those which we have now quoted.

*Antiq., b. 20, c. xi., s. 1. †Wars, &c., b. 6, c. iv., s. 5.

Had we, however, no more than these *fourteen* facts, foretold by Moses and Christ, and attested by Josephus, the Jews, and signed by Titus the Roman emperor,* I know not how any person could rationally withstand such supernatural attestations as these, all of which prove the divine mission of Jesus Christ.

But we shall only at present sum up the facts already quoted from Josephus, and see how much of the evangelical history can be learned from him.

There are *four* highly important points established by Josephus.

1. That there was all over the East, and especially among the Jews and their neighbors in his time, a prevalent expectation, derived from the sacred writings, and cherished by their wise men, that some person should arise in Judea, who should obtain the empire of the world; and that this expectation was a principal occasion of the last wars of the Jews.

2. That John the Baptist appeared in Judea, in the time of Herod; that he obtained great celebrity as a reformer; that he was a person of the highest reputation for sanctity of life, and that he was unjustly imprisoned and put to death by Herod the tetrach, as an object worthy of his personal envy, jealousy, or anger.

3. That in and near the time of John the Baptist flour-

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*Josephus appeals to Vespasian and King Agrippa, then living, for the truth of his history, so far as they were conversant with the facts of their own times. Vespasian and Titus, both generals in the war, and not long after emperors of Rome, had the best opportunity of ascertaining his veracity as a historian; and inasmuch as Titus signed his narrative of the fall of Jerusalem with his own hand, he made himself responsible for its faithfulness. We may therefore regard him as a co-witness with Josephus of the accomplishment of the divine predictions.

"Now the Emperor Titus was so desirous that the knowledge of these affairs should be taken from these books alone, that he subscribed his own hand to them, and ordered that they should be published; and for Agrippa, he wrote me sixty-two letters, and attested the truth of what I had therein delivered; two of which letters I have here subjoined, and thou mayest thereby know their contents. 'King Agrippa to Josephus, his dear friend, sendeth greeting. I have read over the book with great pleasure, and it appears to me that thou hast done it much more accurately, and with greater care than have the other writers. Send the rest of these books. Farewell, my dear friend.'

"'King Agrippa to Josephus, his dear friend, sendeth greeting. It seems, by what thou hast written, that thou standest in need of no instruction, in order to our information from the beginning. However, when thou comest to me, I will inform thee of a great many things which thou dost not know.'" (*Life of Josephus, s. 65.*)

ished all those political persons in Judea, Galilee, and the surrounding countries, mentioned in the New Testament; and that all the great political events in Rome, in Judea, Galilee, Syria, &c., so far as they are noted in the apostolic writings, actually occurred under all the prominent circumstances stated in the Christian books.

4. And that the last days of Jerusalem and the temple, with all the circumstances of the Jews at their final overthrow and dispersion by the Romans, were precisely such as had been distinctly foretold by Moses and by Jesus.

We are far from saying that these four items contain every thing valuable in Josephus corroborative of the Christian books. We are quite of a different opinion. They do, indeed, classify the leading and more prominent matters. But the whole work must be carefully read, so far back, at least, as the conquest of Pompey, 63 years before the nativity of the Messiah, A. D. 71, or to the end of the wars of the Jews, to form a correct estimate of the real value of this historian as a voucher for many of the incidents and allusions found in the historical books of the New Testament. His testimony has always been regarded as of immense value, and as furnishing a variety of document for which there is no substitute in any work which has come down to us. In our judgment it has not been overrated; for after subtracting, as we have done, every thing of a doubtful character—every thing suspected as being an interpolation—we find in his testimony matters relating to the Jews and Romans in his times, and those immediately preceding, which can never be explained on any other hypothesis than that Christianity is as true and as divine as reported by the Evangelists and Apostles.

TACITUS.

Caius Cornelius Tacitus, whose ancestors are unknown, was older than the younger Pliny, who was born in the year of our Lord 61 or 62. In the year 77 or 78 he married the daughter of Cneus Julius Agricola, famous for his consulship, and government of Britian. He enjoyed divers posts of honor and trust under Vespasian, and the following

emperors. He was prætor of Rome under Domitian, in 88, and consul in the short reign of Nerva, in 97. The year was opened by Nerva and T. Virginius Rufus, who were then both of them the third time consuls. Virginius Rufus, who was a man of great eminence, and then of great age, died in his consulship; whereupon Tacitus was substituted in his room, and pronounced his panegyric.

But, as has often been observed, his writings have gained him more honor than all his dignities. His work seems to have been published by him in this order: first, his Description of Germany; next, The Life of Agricola, his father-in-law; after that, his History, beginning with Galba, and ending at the death of Domitian; and lastly, his Annals, beginning with Tiberius, and ending in the death of Nero. Both of these works are now imperfect.

Tacitus and Pliny the younger lived together in intimate friendship. They revised each other's writings before publication. Divers of Pliny's letters are written to him; in particular those two wherein Pliny gives an account of the eruption of Vesuvius, and the death of his uncle. They were sent as memoirs, to be inserted by Tacitus in his histories.

It is allowed that Tacitus flourished in the first century; I therefore place him in the year 100, the third of the Emperor Trajan; and though the two last, and principal of his works, were not published till some time after, undoubtedly he was now employed in collecting materials for them, and composing them. Nor did either of them come down any lower than the death of Domitian.

No. 1. *The testimony of Tacitus concerning Christ and Christians.*

"But neither all human help nor the liberality of the Emperor, nor all the atonements presented to the gods, availed to abate the infamy he lay under of having ordered the city to be set on fire. To suppress, therefore, this common rumor, Nero procured others to be accused, and inflicted exquisite punishment upon those people, who were in abhorrence for their crimes, and were commonly known by the name of Christians. They had their denomination from Christus, who in the reign of Tiberius was put to death as a criminal by the procurator Pontius Pilate. This

pernicious superstition, though checked for a while, broke out again, and spread, not only over Judea, the source of this evil, but reached the city also; whither flow from all quarters all things vile and shameful, and where they find shelter and encouragement. At first they were only apprehended who confessed themselves of that sect; afterwards a vast multitude discovered by them, all of which were condemned, not so much for the crime of burning the city, as for their enmity to mankind. Their executions were so contrived as to expose them to derision and contempt. Some were covered over with the skins of wild beasts, and torn to pieces by dogs; some were crucified; others having been daubed over with combustible materials, were set up as lights in the night time, and thus burned to death. Nero made use of his own gardens as a theater upon this occasion, and also exhibited the diversions of the Circus, sometimes standing in the crowd as a spectator, in the habit of a charioteer, at other times driving a chariot himself; till at length these men, though really criminal, and deserving exemplary punishment, began to be commiserated, as people who were destroyed, not out of regard to the public welfare, but only to gratify the cruelty of one man." (*Annals, b.* 15, *c. xliv.*) *

No. 2. *The testimony of Tacitus concerning the Jews, and, as he calls it, "the final end of the renowned city of Jerusalem."*

Lardner condenses his testimony thus:

He says that Judea was first brought into subjection to the Romans by Pompey. After which he gives a summary

* This testimony is so important, that we give not only a popular translation of it, but for the sake of the learned we will quote the original.

"Sed non ope humana, non largitionibus principis, aut deum placamentis decedebat infamia, quin jussum incedium crederetur. Ergo abolendo rumori Nero subdidit reos, et quæsitissimis pœnis affecit, quos, perflagitia invisos, vulgus christianos appellabat. Auctor nominis ejus Christus, qui, Tiberio imperante, per procuratorem Pontium Pilatum supplicio affectus erat. Repressa in præsens exitiabilis superstitio rursus erumpebat, non modo per Judæam, originem ejus mali, sed per Urbem etiam, quo cuncta undique, atrocia aut pudenda confluunt, celebranturque. Igitur primo corrupti qui fatebantur, deinde indicio eorum multitudo ingens, haud perinde in crimine incendii, quam odio humani generis, convicti sunt. Et pereuntibus addita ludibria, ut ferarum tergis contecti, laniatu canum interirent, aut crucibus affixi, aut flammandi, atque, ubi defecisset dies, in usum nocturni luminis urerentur. Hortos suos ei spectaculo Nero obtulerat, et Circense ludicrum edebat, habitu aurigæ permixtus plebi vel circulo [curriculo legit Lipsius] insistens. Unde quanquam adversus sontes, et novissima exempla meritos, miseratio oriebatur, tanquam non utilitate publica, sed in sævitiam unius absumerentur."

account of their affairs under Herod and his sons, the Emperors Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero. He mentions Felix, whom he represents as a bad man, and tyrannical in his government. However, the Jews, he says, bore the exactions of their governors, till the time of their procurator, Gessius Florus, under whom the war began. Cestius Gallus, president of Syria, came to his assistance; but he being defeated, Nero sent Vespasian into Judea, who was a general of great merit and reputation, and having under him good officers, in the space of two years, meaning the years 67 and 68, he reduced the open country, and all the cities of Judea, excepting Jerusalem. The next year, 69, was taken up in civil wars; meaning the time of the short reigns of Galba, Otho, Vitellius, till the accession of Vespasian. The following year (and the beginning of it), Titus was appointed to attend the affairs of Judea, who now drew near to Jerusalem and besieged it. Tacitus supposed that Titus was in haste to go to Rome to enjoy the pleasures and splendors of the city. He therefore carried on the siege with the greatest vigor. The army likewise was intent upon plunder, and eager to gratify their revenge. The city, however, was strong by situation, and with good walls and ramparts: the high tower, Antonia, conspicuous from far. The temple itself was like a citadel well fortified. They had a fountain of water that ran continually, and the mountains were hollowed under ground. Moreover, they had pools and cisterns for preserving rain water. And there was a great confluence of people. For the men of the other cities had been reduced, and in general all the turbulent and seditious people of the nation came hither. There were three captains, or heads of factions, and as many armies; Simon, John, called also Bargiorus, and Eleazar, who occupied several parts of the city. Among themselves they had fierce contentions, and therein great quantities of provisions were consumed. Eleazar being killed, they were reduced to two factions. These fought with each other till the near approach of the Romans obliged them to agreement. There were many prodigies foresignifying their ruin, which were not to be averted by all the sacrifices and vows of that people, superstitious in their own way of worship, though different from all others

Armies were seen fighting in the air with brandished weapons. A fire fell upon the temple from the clouds. The doors of the temple were suddenly opened. At the same time there was a loud voice declaring that the gods were removing: which was accompanied with the sound of a multitude going out. All which things were supposed by some to portend great calamities. But the most had a strong persuasion that it was said in the ancient writings of the priests [that is, ancient writings in the custody of the priests], that at that very time the East should prevail, and that some who should come from Judea should obtain the empire of the world; which ambiguities foretold Vespasian and Titus. But the common people, according to the usual influence of human passions, having once appropriated to themselves this vast grandeur of the fates, could not be brought to understand the true meaning by all their adversities. We have been assured that the number of the besieged amounted to six hundred thousand. And more bore arms than could have been expected from that number. For great was the resolution of all, both men and women. Against this people and city was Titus sent. As the city could not be taken by assault, different posts were assigned to the several legions. Battering engines of all kinds were prepared: and all the methods hitherto practiced in sieges by the ancients, as well as new inventions, were employed on this occasion. (*Tac., His., b.* 5, *c. ix.–xiii.*)

That he cordially hated the Christians, is so very obvious on the face of the preceding extracts, that we need not enlarge on it. We are not therefore to expect any favor from this heathen witness. So much the better, we wish to show how many of the gospel facts are attested by our enemies.

SUMMARY OF THE FACTS TESTIFIED BY TACITUS.

1. That Christ is the *founder* of the sect of the *Christians.*
2. That Christ was *put to death as a criminal.*
3. That he was put to death by *Pontius Pilate.*
4. That *Tiberius* was then *Emperor* of Rome. Consequently,—
5. The Messiah was *born* in the reign of *Augustus.*
6. This "*pernicious superstition*" was then checked for a while

But still more mysterious, unless the crucified criminal was publicly justified by a restoration to life,—

7. This "pernicious superstition" *broke out again*, and spread not only over Judea, but reached the city of Rome. Also,—

8. This "pernicious superstition" *began in Judea.*

9. The Christians *found shelter and encouragement in Rome*, before Tacitus wrote his Annals.

10. The Christians were *persecuted* in Rome as early as the year 64, about 30 years after the death of Christ.

11. Some boldly and publicly confessed the faith at all hazards, and were apprehended.

12. *A vast multitude* were discovered and condemned for their hatred to mankind, much more than for the burning of the city.

13. They were hated as the offscourings of the earth, and as the filth of all things; their executions were so contrived as to expose them to derision and contempt.

14. They were destroyed, *not out of regard to the public welfare*, but only to gratify *the cruelty of one man:* consequently they were really innocent of the crimes alleged against them, even in the better judgment of Tacitus himself. Finally, they began to be commiserated because they were so *cruelly* slaughtered.

These palpable facts, some of which we call the *gospel facts*, and others implied in them, are fairly gleaned from the first extracts from Tacitus. The facts, and the epithets attached to them, are to be separated by the judicious reasoner. The former are historic truths, the latter the calumny of the reporter, which is to be regarded according to his prejudices. Tacitus hated the Christians, because they refused to worship his idol gods, and thus disparaged the national religion, which, as a Roman statesman, he delighted to honor. There is no specification of any crime against the founder of this religion or his followers, in the volumes of Tacitus. His reproaches are therefore perfectly gratuitous; nay, more, by declaring the Christians were executed "not out of regard to the public welfare," but "to gratify the cruelty of one man," he justifies them so far as respects any detriment to the public from their doctrine or their deeds.

It is specially worthy of observation that in Rome, so early as the *tenth* of Nero's reign, about thirty years after the crucifixion, "the multitude" of Christians was so great as to arrest the attention of this historian; and that in the midst of such terrors and havoc, so many had the courage and constancy to confess their faith in a crucified Christ.

From the second extract we have a new confirmation of the predictions of Moses and Jesus concerning the last days of the Jews in Judea. The following particulars coming from Tacitus are worthy of remembrance:

1. That the Jews' religion was different from all others.
2. That in the years 67 and 68, Vespasian subdued all the cities of Judea, except Jerusalem.
3. That the year 69 was taken up in various civil wars, during the short reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, till the accession of Vespasian.
4. That in the year 70, Titus was appointed to carry on the war in Judea as commander-in-chief; who laid siege to Jerusalem, crowded, he reports, with 600,000 inhabitants; a definite for an indefinite great number.
5. That prodigious and fearful sights, foresignifying their ruin, were various and numerous.
6. The ambiguous oracle mentioned by Josephus is repeated by our historian, and the confidence with which it was believed is emphatically asserted. It is also represented as an occasion of this war.

We have to regret that the next book of Tacitus, together with all the following books of this history, are lost; especially as at the head of the 5th book of his history, from which the preceding extracts are taken, it is written, "*The final end of the renowned city of Jerusalem.*" As far as his history is extant, it essentially accords with that of Josephus, and the intimations found in the Evangelists concerning the fall of Jerusalem.

Of the forces, he mentioned "the three legions quartered in Judea, the twelfth brought in from Syria, and other legions from Alexandria, besides the armies of the Roman allies, the kings Agrippa, Schemus, and Antiochus, and a large body of Arabians, always averse to the Jews, and some volunteers of distinction even from Rome and Italy,

who were willing to serve under Titus, a general of such renown and expectation, desirous to signalize their valor before him, and thereby to recommend themselves to his favor." (*B.* 5, *c. i.*)

This also verifies the predictions of Moses concerning the "nation from far, of a fierce countenance," by which the Jews were to be punished for their apostasy.

Amongst the heathen testimonies of the first century, enumerated by some writers, there are a few of very doubtful character. Of this class we esteem the correspondence of Abgarus king of Edessa, and Jesus Christ, copied by Eusebius from the archives of the city of Edessa, in the Syriac language, and thence translated into Greek. We have no faith in its genuineness, and therefore we shall not trouble the reader with it. Of the same character is a story told by Cleombrotus, one of the speakers in Plutarch's dialogues, concerning the cessation of oracles of the great Pan, the reputed son of Mercury and Penelope. The great Pan has been represented by some learned men as denoting Jesus Christ, because the story is made to bear date with the reign of Tiberius. To this class we also assign the letters of L. A. Seneca, the philosopher, to Paul, and Paul's letters to Seneca.

Much is said of the ACTS OF PILATE and *his letter to Tiberius* concerning Christ, and of his attempt in the Roman senate to have Jesus recognized and enrolled as a god. Justin Martyr, in his first apology presented to the Emperor Antonius Pius, about the year 140, having spoken of the crucifixion and its attendant consequences, adds, "And that these things were so done, you may know from the ACTS made in the time of Pontius Pilate." Tertullian, in his apology, A. D. 200, speaking of the crucifixion and resurrection, and his appearance to his disciples, says, "Of all these things relating to Christ, Pilate, in his conscience a Christian, sent an account to Tiberias, then emperor." In another part of his apology he speaks as follows:

"There was an ancient decree, that no one should be received for a deity unless he was first approved of by the senate. Tiberius, in whose time the Christian religion had its rise, having received from Palestine in Syria an account of such things as manifested our Saviour's divinity, pro-

posed to the senate, and giving his own vote as first in his favor, that he should be placed among the gods. The senate refused, because he had himself declined that honor. Nevertheless the emperor persisted in his own opinion, and ordered that if any accused the Christians they should be punished. Search, says he, your own writings, and you will find that Nero was the first emperor who exercised any acts of severity toward the Christians, because they were then very numerous at Rome."

Eusebius also deposes:

"When the wonderful resurrection of our Saviour and his ascension to heaven were in the mouths of all men, it being an ancient custom for the governors of provinces to write to the Emperor, and give him an account of new and remarkable occurrences, that he might not be ignorant of anything; our Saviour's resurrection being much talked of throughout all Palestine, Pilate informed the Emperor of it, as likewise of his miracles, which he had heard of; and that, being raised up after he had been put to death, he was already believed by many to be a god. And it is said that Tiberius referred the matter to the senate; but that they refused their consent, under a pretense that it had not been first approved of by them; there being an ancient law that no one should be deified among the Romans without an order of the senate; but indeed because the saving and divine doctrine of the gospel needed not to be confirmed by human judgment and authority. However, Tiberius persisted in his former sentiment, and allowed not anything to be done that was prejudicial to the doctrine of Christ. These things are related by Tertullian, a man famous on other accounts, and particularly for his skill in the Roman laws. I say he speaks thus in his apology for the Christians, written by him in the Roman tongue, but since translated into Greek. His words are these: 'There was an ancient decree, that no one should be consecrated as a deity by the Emperor, unless he was first approved of by the senate.' Marcus Emilius knows this by his god Alburnus. This is to our purpose, forasmuch as among you divinity is bestowed by human judgment. And if God does please man, he shall not be God. And, according to this way of thinking, man must be pro-

pitious to God. Tiberius, therefore, in whose time the Christian name was first known in the world, having received an account of this doctrine out of Palestine, where it began, communicated that account to the senate: giving at the same time his own suffrage in favor of it. But the senate rejected it, because it had not been approved by themselves. Nevertheless the Emperor persisted in his judgment, and threatened death to such as should accuse the Christians." "Which" adds Eusebius, "could be no other than a disposal of Divine Providence, that the doctrine of the gospel, which was then in its beginning, might be preached all over the world without molestation."

After examining the *pro* and *con* evidence in favor of these testimonies concerning the "ACTS OF PILATE" the "letter to Tiberius," and his motion thereon, although there is much in favor of them, yet as there is some reason to doubt, and as our plan permits us not to rely upon any testimony or incident of an ambiguous character, we place them not in our premises, and shall make no use of them in our argument deduced from heathen witnesses.

With these last we place the "monumental inscription concerning the Christians in the time of Nero," found in Portugal, formerly called Lusitania, in the following words and style:

TO NERO CLAUDIUS CESAR,
AUGUSTUS, HIGH-PRIEST,
FOR CLEARING THE PROVINCE
OF ROBBERS AND THOSE
WHO TAUGHT MANKIND
A NEW SUPERSTITION.

By the "New Superstition" all understand the Christian religion. Nero in A. D. 68 did no doubt proscribe the Christians; and it is most probable this monument and inscription are genuine. But as one or two learned antiquarians have doubted its genuineness, I will not build it into my pillar.

But, beside these, there are testimonies of undoubted certainty; such as Pliny the elder, Martial, the celebrated epigrammatist, and Juvenal, the famous satirist and Roman poet. But they are too refined and remote for common

use; and, still more cogent against filling up our pages with such disquisitions, there is nothing in them of new merit farther than we have in the more plain and forcible details of those witnesses on whom we rely. We shall therefore hasten to Suetonius, whom we place next to Tacitus.*

*Curiosity will demand what did these Roman poets of the first century say: We answer, Martial the Spaniard, and celebrated writer of epigrams, alludes to the patient sufferings of the Christians in the following words:

In matutina nuper spectatus arena
Mucius imposuit qui sua membra focis.
Si patiens fortisque tibi durusque videtur,
Abderitanæ pectora plebis habes,
Nam, cum dicatur, tunica præsente molesta,
Ure manum, plus est dicere: Non facio.
(*Martial, l. x., Epigr. 25.*)

"You have, perhaps, lately seen acted in the theater, Mucius, who thrust his hand into the fire. If you think such an one patient, valiant, stout, you are a mere senseless dotard. For it is a much greater thing when threatened with the troublesome coat, to say I do not sacrifice, than to obey the command—burn the hand."

The troublesome coat, or shirt, here mentioned, a cruelty which, as we have before learned from Tacitus, the innocent Christians unjustly suffered, was made like a sack of paper or coarse linen cloth; and having been first besmeared within and without with pitch, wax, resin, sulphur, and such like combustible materials, or dipt all over in them, was put upon the person for whom it was appointed; and that he might be kept upright, the more to resemble a flaming torch, his chin was fastened to a stake fixed in the ground.

That this was esteemed a cruel death is manifest from Seneca; who, describing the greatest causes of fear, writes to this purpose: Imagine here, says he, a prison, crosses, and racks, and the hook, and a stake thrust through the body and coming out at the mouth, and the limbs torn by chariots pulling adverse ways, and that coat besmeared and interwoven with combustible materials, nutriment for fire, and whatever else beside these cruelty has invented. It is no wonder if, in such a case, fear riseth high, where the variety of evils is so great, and the preparation is so terrible.

Juvenal, the author of sixteen satires still extant, about the same time says:

Pone Tigellinum, tæda lucebis in illa,
Qua stantes ardent, qui fixo gutture fumant,
Et latum media sulcum deducit arena.
(*Juven., Sat. i., 155, &c.*)

But if that honest license now you take,
If into rogues omnipotent you rake,
Death is your doom, impal'd upon a stake,
Smear'd o'er with wax, and set on fire to light
The streets, and make a dreadful blaze by night.

Or, more literally: Describe a great villain, such as was Tigellinus, (a corrupt minister under Nero), and you shall suffer the same punishment with those who stand burning in their own flame and smoke, their head being held up by a stake fixed to their chin, till they make a long stream (of blood and running sulphur) on the ground.

In another satire Juvenal speaks of the death of Domitian in this manner: Many illustrious men he destroyed who found no avenger; at last he perished, when he became formidable to the rabble. This ruined him, who long before was stained by the noble blood of the Lamiæ.

On which Lardner says:

Ælius Lamia, whose death is particularly mentioned by Suetonius, undoubtedly was a man of a very ancient and noble family. And Domitian had killed many other senators. The Christians were gen-

SUETONIUS.

Caius Suetonius Tranquillus, son of Suetonius Lenis, flourished in the reigns of Trajan and Adrian, to the latter of whom he was secretary: which place he lost about the year 121. Pliny the younger had a particular friendship for him. Several of Pliny's letters still extant are written to him; and he performed for him divers good offices. Suetonius, having no children by his wife, Pliny procured for him from Trajan *jus trium liberorum*, or the privilege of those who have three children. His recommendation of him to the Emperor is very affectionate, and exhibits a very amiable character.

That he was born about the beginning of the reign of Vespasian, is argued hence—that about twenty years after the death of Nero, or in 88, he speaks of himself as a young man. It may be supposed, therefore, that in the thirteenth of Trajan, or the year of our Lord 110, he was not less than forty years of age.

He was the author of a good number of books, of which there are now none remaining but his Lives of the First Twelve Cæsars, and a part of a work concerning Illustrious Grammarians and Rhetoricians.

Suetonius, in the life of the Emperor Claudius, who reigned from the year 41 to 54, says of him: "He banished the Jews from Rome, who were continually making disturbances, Chrestus being their leader."

This passage undoubtedly confirms what is said, Acts xviii. 2, that Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome. Some learned men are not satisfied that this relates to Christians; but it is well known that our Saviour

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erally of the meaner rank of people, and still more despised for their religion than their condition. But they were not all of the rabble, or cobblers and tailors, as Juvenal would insinuate. And Flavius Clement, one of those whom Domitian put to death near the end of his reign, and whose death, as Suetonius expressly says, hastened Domitian's ruin, was of the imperial family; and, as we think, a Christian. However, it is observable that Juvenal says Domitian's death soon followed after some acts of cruelty toward mean people. Herein he agrees with and confirms the accounts of some Christian writers, particularly that of Cecilius, or Lactantius, in his book of the Death of Persecutors; who observes that Domitian had been long permitted to exercise great cruelties upon his subjects; but when he began to persecute the servants of God, he was soon delivered up into the hands of his enemies.

was sometimes called Chrestus by heathen people. And it is not impossible that the Jewish enmity against those of their own country, or others who had embraced Christianity, might produce some disputes and disturbances which came to the Emperor's knowledge. This seems to be the meaning of Suetonius, that there were disturbances among the Jews and others at Rome, upon occasion of Christ and his followers.

If this passage were clear, we should have a testimony from a heathen author of good note, that there were Christians at Rome before the end of the reign of Claudius; as indeed we know there were from an authentic author of our own. (Acts xviii. 2 and 26, and compare Rom. xvi.) And though it should not be reckoned clear and decisive, it has such an appearance of probability as has satisfied many learned men of good judgment.

This passage of Suetonius is expressly cited by Orosius, a Christian historian of the fifteenth century. But he was not clear about the meaning of it.

In the life of Nero, whose reign began in 54 and ended in 68, Suetonius says: "The Christians were punished; a sort of men of a new and magical superstition."

Suetonius here assures us that the Christian religion was lately arisen, and that it had already gained footing in the empire. From his calling it a magical superstition, it may be argued that there were some things of an extraordinary nature performed by the Christians: or that they endeavored to justify their embracing the religion of Christ, as of divine original, upon the ground of some wonderful works, which bore testimony to its truth and authority.

I have translated the word *malefica* used by Suetonius, magically, agreeably to the judgment of divers learned men. But Mr. Mosheim thinks the word to be equivalent to *exitiabilis*, in Tacitus, meaning pernicious. The Christians were singular in their religious sentiment, and opposed the religions of all nations. The Romans therefore considered them, he thinks, as enemies to all mankind, and disposed to disturb the public peace.

In the word *new* undoubtedly there is a sting. For, as Tacitus says of the Jews, whatever might be the origin of their religion, it has the advantage of antiquity.

That the Christians were roughly handled in the reign of Nero, we have seen from Tacitus, a contemporary writer. Nevertheless, it has been observed by some learned men that Suetonius does not say particularly that they were punished at Rome, or for setting fire to the city. His expressions are general, and may include more extensive sufferings in the provinces as well as the city. Of which we have good assurance from divers ancient Christian writers.

Once more. It may be observed that Suetonius speaks with approbation of the sufferings which the Christians endured in this reign. For they are mentioned together with divers other acts, ordinances, or institutions of Nero, which were entitled to some commendation: as any one will allow who observes the several articles in the same chapter.

In his life of Vespasian, Suetonius also records the "ambiguous oracle" mentioned by Josephus and Tacitus. He says:

"There had been for a long time all over the East a prevailing opinion that it was in the fates [in the decrees or books of the fates] that at that time some one from Judea should obtain the empire of the world. By the event it appeared that a Roman emperor was meant by that prediction. The Jews applying it to themselves, went into a rebellion. At the first they had such success that they not only overcame their own governor, but also defeated the proconsular governor of Syria who came to his assistance. There being now manifest occasion for a general of great reputation and a numerous army, Vespasian was appointed for that service; who, among other commanders under him, had his eldest son Titus. Having put his army into good order, he entered upon the war with great vigor, and not without hazard to his own person, having been slightly wounded in an attack made at one of their towns, and received several darts upon his shield." (*Suet., Vesp., c. iv.—viii*).

The conspicuity given to this prevailing expectation by Josephus, Tacitus, and Suetonius, demands that we should emphatically notice it. Let it then be remarked that in the Jewish prophets, then translated into the most learned and

popular living languages, and generally read all over the East, various express and clear predictions are written, fully warranting the expectation so often alluded to by all the reputed writers of that age. So early as the time of Jacob, it was intimated that Shiloh, of the tribe of Judah, would have the scepter and allegiance of the world. That patriarch, when dying, said: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a law-giver from between his feet, till Shiloh come; and *to him* shall the gathering of the people be." This gave to the *Jews*, so called from *Judah*, and to their land of *Judea*, the pledge of the empire of the world. The prophets afterwards mentioned the exact place where he should be born, and the very year of his nativity. Micah, 700 years before the Christian age, said: "But thou BETHLEHEM Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judea, yet out of thee he shall come forth that is to be RULER in Israel, whose *goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*"

Daniel, as well as the other prophets, also foretells the time of his nativity: "From the going forth of the decree to restore and build Jerusalem" (which occurred in the 7th year of Artaxerxes Longimanus—Ezra vii. 21) "unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seventy weeks [of years] and three score and two weeks." This gives us the *commencement* of the whole interval of this prophecy. "*Seventy weeks* [490 years] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in an everlasting justification, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy." This gives us the whole period of 490 years, from the going forth of the decree to the coronation of the Messiah; to the anointing of the Most Holy.

Now, according to Sir Isaac Newton, it was 457 from the 7th of Artaxerxes to the birth of the Messiah, and to his death 490 years. But the same prophet, in his interpretation of the dream of the Chaldean monarch, positively and unfiguratively asserts "that in the days of the last kings [the Roman emperors] the God of heaven would SET UP a kingdom," which should finally engross all the empires of the world - which kingdom would "STAND FOR EVER."

There were then good grounds for the "prevailing expectation" all over the East that some person from Judea should in those times obtain the empire of the world. R. Nehumias, a Jew, as quoted by Grotius, who flourished about fifty years before the Christian era, said that those words quoted from Daniel certainly referred to the times of the Messiah.

There are a few things in the oracle worthy of special attention:

1. The time when the person should appear.
2. The place where he should commence his conquests.
3. The success of his enterprise; and
4. The credit which it gained all over the East as confessed by Josephus, Tacitus and Suetonius. In these matters all these witnesses agree. To these also might be added Philo, the Jewish writer, a contemporary of Josephus and some of the Apostles. He is said to have quoted and commented on this "general expectation," and to have made several references to the Christians.*

It may also be noted here that from the Jewish prophets the pagan sybils gave out their oracles. The same year that Pompey took Jerusalem one of the sybil oracles made a great noise, "that Nature was about to bring forth a king to the Romans." Suetonius says this so terrified the Roman senate that they made a decree that none born that year should be educated. And in his life of Augustus, he says that "those whose wives were pregnant that year did each conceive great hopes of applying the prophecy to themselves."†

Appian, Sallust, Plutarch and Cicero all say that this prophecy of the sybils stirred up Cornelius Lentulus to think that he was the man who should be king of the Romans. Some applied it to Cæsar. Cicero laughed at the application, and affirmed that this prophecy should not be applied to any one born in Rome.

Even Virgil, the poet, who wrote his Eclogues about the time of Herod the Great, compliments the Consul Pollio with this prophecy, supposing it might refer to his son

* Eusebius, p. 21–25.

† Senatum exterritum censuise, ne quis illo anno genitus, educaretur. eos qui gravidas uxores haberent, quod ad se quisque spem traheret curasse ne senatus consultum ad Ærarium defferretur. (*Virg., Ec. 4.*)

Saloninus, then born. Virgil substantially quotes and versifies the prophecies of Isaiah, and applies them to this child Saloninus:

> The last age, decreed by Fate, is come;
> And a new frame of all things does begin,
> A holy progeny from Heaven descends.
> Auspicious be his birth! which puts an end
> To th' iron age! and from whence shall rise
> A golden state far glorious through the earth." *

Then the poet alludes to Isaiah lxv. 17. "The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain:"

> "Nor shall the flocks fierce lions fear,
> Nor serpent shall be there, nor herb of pois'nous juice." †

Then the expiation of Daniel is referred to:

> "By thee what footsteps of our sins remain,
> Are blotted out, and the whole world set free
> From her perpetual bondage and her fear." ‡

The very words of Haggai are by the poet next referred to:

> "Enter on thy honors! Now 's the time,
> Offspring of God! O thou great gift of Jove!
> Behold the world!—heaven, earth, and seas do shake;
> Behold how all rejoice to greet that glorious day! §

Virgil, as if he were skilled in the Jewish scriptures, goes on to state that these glorious times should not immediately succeed the birth of that wonderful child:

> "Yet some remains shall still be left
> Of ancient fraud; and wars shall still go on." ‖

Now the question is, not whether Virgil applied this partly to Augustus, Pollio, or Saloninus then born; but

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* Ultima Cumæi venit jam carminis ætas:
Magnus ab integro sæclorum nascitur ordo.
Jam nova progenies cœlo demittitur alto.
Tu modo nascenti puero, quo ferrea primum
Desinet, ac toto surget gens aurea mundo. (*Virg., Ec. 4.*)

‡ ——Nec magnos metuent armenta leones:
Occidet et serpens, et fallax herba veneni
Occidet. (*Virg., Ec. 4.*)

† Te duce, si qua manent sceleris vestigia nostri,
Irrita perpetua solvent formidine terras. (*Virg., Ec. 4.*)

‖ Aggredere, o magnos (aderit jam tempus) honores,
Chara Deum soboles, magnum Jovis incrementum.
Aspice convexo nutantem pondere mundum,
Terrasque, tractusque maris, cœlumque profundum:
Aspice, venturo lætentur ut omnia sæclo. (*Virg., Ec. 4.*)

§ Pauca tamen suberunt priscæ vestigia fraudis:
Erunt etiam altera bella. (*Virg., Ec. 4.*)

whether he did not apply it to the general expectation everywhere prevalent that a wonderful person was to be born and a new age to commence.

Now as no documents—no book of fates, or of the future destinies of our race—can be adduced from the heathen nations in which there are any such intimations as those above quoted; and as the Jewish scriptures abound in such intimations; and as they were read all over the East, both in Hebrew and Greek, long before the birth of Jesus of Nazareth; we must value very highly the singular concurrence of so many alien writers, all attesting not only the existence but the intelligibility of the prophecies concerning Christ our King; and we may add that it does appear to us very difficult, if not absolutely impossible, for any intelligent unbeliever to dispose of these witnesses, or the facts which they attest, in any way honorable to his *intelligence* and *honesty;* and to deny them he can not, unless he deny everything written by Jews, Gentiles and Christians.

Suetonius, though a biographer rather than a historian, in his life of Titus speaks of the fall of Jerusalem:

"Whilst he [Titus] yet served under Vespasian, he took Tarichea and Gamala, two strong cities of Judea; and having in an engagement lost his own horse, he mounted another, whose rider had been killed in fighting against him. Titus having been left in Judea to complete the reduction of that country, he, in the last siege of Jerusalem, killed seven of the enemy with as many darts: he took that city on his daughter's birthday, and was then saluted by the soldiers with the title of emperor. Titus triumphed at Rome with his father."

The sum of his testimony is:

1. Christ is the leader of the Christians.

2. The Christian religion was introduced by extraordinary means—"a new and *magical* superstition."

3. The Christians were much persecuted in the reign of Nero.

4. The Jews were banished from Rome by Claudius, as asserted by Luke.

5. The Jews applying to themselves the prophecy concerning one from Judea obtaining the empire of the world,

rebelled against the Romans, and the cities of Judea were subdued.

6. Jerusalem besieged and conquered by the Romans, as foretold by Jesus Christ, and written by his Apostles.'

THE MISHNA AND TALMUD.

We can find no more suitable place for a few extracts from the Jewish Mishna and Talmud. The Mishna properly belongs to the second century. We do not value them very highly, nevertheless they ought to appear in a work of this sort, and are worthy of some consideration.

The word Talmud is used in different senses; sometimes it denotes the Mishna, which is the text; at other times it is used for the commentaries upon the Mishna; at other times it includes both: I shall use it as distinct from the Mishna, denoting the commentaries upon it, of which there are but two, the Jerusalem and the Babylonian.

The compiler of the Mishna is Rabbi Jehuda Hakkadosch, or the Holy, upon whom the highest commendations are bestowed by Maimonides, as eminent for humility, temperance and every branch of piety, as also for learning and eloquence, and likewise for his riches; which are magnified by him and other Jewish writers, beyond all reasonable bounds of probability.

But it may not be amiss to give my readers some farther insight into this work, by reciting an article of Dr. Prideaux in his Connexion of the History of the Old and New Testaments. He observes how the number of Jewish traditions had increased; "and thus," says he, "it went on to the middle of the second century after Christ, when Antoninus Pius governed the Roman Empire, by which time they found it necessary to put all these traditions into writing; for they were grown to so great a number, and enlarged to so great a heap, as to exceed the possibility of being any longer preserved by the memory of men. And therefore, there being danger that under these disadvantages they might be all forgotten and lost, for the preventing hereof it was resolved they should all be collected and put into a book; and Rabbi Judah, the son of Simeon, who, from the reputed sanctity of his life, was called Hakkadosch, that is,

the Holy, and was then rector of the school which they had at Tiberias in Galilee, undertook the work and compiled it in six books, each consisting of several tracts, which all together make up the number of sixty-three——This is the book called Mishna; which book was forthwith received by the Jews with great veneration throughout all their dispersions, and hath ever since been held in high esteem among them——And therefore, as soon as it was published, it became the object of the studies of all their learned men; and the chiefest of them employed themselves to make comments upon it; and these, with the Mishna, made up both their Talmuds; that is, the Jerusalem Talmud and the Babylonish Talmud. These comments they call Gemara, that is, the Complement; because by them the Mishna is fully explained, and the whole traditionary doctrine of their law and their religion completed; for the Mishna is the text, and the Gemara the comment; and both together is what they call the Talmud. That made by the Jews of Judea is called the Jerusalem Talmud, and that made by the Jews of Babylonia, the Babylonish Talmud. The former was completed about the year of our Lord 300, and is published in one large folio; the latter was published about two hundred years after, in the beginning of the sixth century, and hath had several editions since the invention of printing: the last, published at Amsterdam, is in twelve folios. And in those two Talmuds is contained the whole of the Jewish religion that is now professed among them: but the Babylonish Talmud is that which they chiefly follow."

The same learned author again afterwards computes that the Mishna was composed about the one hundred and fiftieth year of our Lord, the Jerusalem Talmud about the three hundreth year, and the other Talmud about the five hundreth year of our Lord.

Dr. Lightfoot (Fall of Jerusalem, Vol. I., sec. vii., p. 369) says that R. Judah outlived both the Antonines, and Commodus also. And afterwards, in the same page: "He compiled the Mishna about the year of Christ 190, in the latter end of the reign of Commodus; or, as some compute, in the year of Christ 220, and a hundred and fifty years after the destruction of Jerusalem."

If, therefore, I place this work at the year 180, I think I place it soon enough.

I shall now make a few extracts out of the Mishna.

In the tract concerning fasts are these words: "Five heavy afflictions have befallen our ancestors on the seventeenth day of the month Tammuz [June], and as many on the ninth day of the month Ab [July]: for on the seventeenth day of Tammuz the tables of the law were broken; the perpetual sacrifice ceased; the walls of the city were broken open; the law was burnt by Apostemus; and an idol was set up in the temple. On the ninth day of the month Ab, God determined concerning our fathers, that they should not enter into the promised land; the first and second temple were desolated; the city Bither was taken; the holy city was destroyed: for which reason, as soon as the month Ab begins, rejoicings are abated.

"When Rabbi Meir died, there were none left to instruct men in wise parables.——

———"When Simeon, son of Gamaliel, died, there came locusts, and calamities were increased. When R. Akiba died, the glory of the law vanished away. Upon the death of Gamaliel the Aged, the honor of the law vanished, and there was an end to purity and sanctimony. When Rabbi Ishmael, son of Babi, died, the splendor of the priesthood was tarnished. When Rabbi [Judah] died, there was no more any modesty of fear or trangression. Rabbi Pinehas, son of Ishmael, said, When the temple was destroyed, all men were covered with shame, both wise men and nobles; and all now covered their heads; the bountiful are reduced to poverty, and the violent and slanderous prevail; nor is there any to explain the law, nor are there any who ask and inquire. What then shall we do? Let us trust in our heavenly Father. R. Eliezer, surnamed the Great, says, From the time the temple was destroyed the wise men began to be like scribes, the scribes like the sextons, and the sextons like the vulgar; and the vulgar are continually degenerating from bad to worse: nor are there any who ask and inquire. What then shall we do? Let us trust in our heavenly Father. A short time before the coming of the Messiah, impudence will be increased, and great will be the price of provisions. The vine will bear fruit; never-

theless wine will be sold at a high price. The supreme empire of the world will be overwhelmed with bad opinions: nor will there be room for any to correct them. Synagogues will be turned into brothel houses, and the whole land of Judea will be laid waste. Excellent men will wander from town to town, and experience no offices of humanity. The wisdom of the masters will be slighted, and all who strive to avoid transgression will be condemned, and great will be the dearth of truth. Young men will cover the faces of the aged with shame; and the aged will rise before the young. The son will dishonor the father; and the daughter will rise up against her mother; and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's enemies will be they of his own household. In a word, that age will have a canine appearance. Nor will the son reverence the father. What then shall we do? Let us trust in our heavenly Father.———May the coming of Elias be hastened. And may the eternal God graciously vouchsafe that we may be preserved to that time."

Lardner's comment on this extract to me appears very just. It is as follows:

"This whole passage appears to me to be a disguised and invidious representation of the state of things under the gospel dispensation since the appearance of Jesus, whom his disciples and followers have received as the Messiah: and especially after the destruction of Jerusalem, when Christianity prevailed and Judaism declined.

"For, 1. The destruction of the Jewish temple is acknowledged. Nevertheless here are no tokens of repentance and humiliation, but complaints and reflections upon others. The times were bad. But the blame is all laid upon others.

"2. The 'supreme empire of the world,' he says, 'will be,' or is 'overwhelmed with bad opinions;' meaning, as I think, the Christian religion, and the several sects and heresies which arose in the second century, and some of them not far from the beginning of it.

"3. 'Synagogues will be turned into brothel houses.' He refers to the common reports among the vulgar, that the Christians practiced promiscuous lewdness in their religious assemblies. And he adopts the calumny.

"4. In what follows, the author adopts the words of our Lord, recorded Matt. x. 35, 36, and Luke xii. 51–53, which words are also in Micah vii. 6, concerning the dissensions that would be in families; some cheerfully embracing his doctrine, whilst others obstinately rejected it, and were bitter towards those who received it; which the compiler of this work represents as the utmost distress and misery, and as hitherto unknown and unparalleled wickedness.

"5. And what do all the clamors of this paragraph mean concerning the 'failure' or dearth 'of truth, the multiplicity of bad opinions, whilst there was no room left for reproof or correction'? What is intended by the complaints that 'the wisdom of the masters was slighted, that there was an end to purity and sanctimony, to modesty and the fear of transgression, and that the young covered the faces of the aged with shame, and the aged rose up to the young,' and the rest?

"All these complaints, as seems to me, refer to the resolution and steadiness of the converts to Christianity from Judaism and Gentilism, who judged for themselves, and admitted the evidences of the truth of the new religion, which overpowered their minds. Of which therefore they made an open profession, notwithstanding the sophistry, the entreaties, the menaces of the world about them; many of whom were their superiors in age, learning, and outward circumstance and condition. Of all this we have in this passage, as seems to me, a graphical description.

"I have done with the Mishna. I proceed to the Talmud.

"The first passage to be taken thence will relate to our Lord's nativity.

"'Upon a certain day, when several masters were sitting at the gate of the city, two boys passed by before them; one of whom covered his head, the other had his head uncovered. Concerning him who, contrary to all the rules of modesty, had boldly passed by with his head uncovered, Elieser said he believed he was spurious: R. Joshua said he believed he was the son of a woman set apart: but R. Akiba said he was both. The others said to Akiba, Why do you differ from the rest of your brethren? He answered that he could prove the truth of what he said.

Accordingly he went to the mother of the boy, whom he found sitting in the market, and selling herbs. He then says to her, My daughter, answer me a question which I am going to put to you, and I assure you of a portion of happiness in the world to come. She answered: Confirm what you say with an oath. Akiba then swore with his lips, but at the same time absolved himself in his own mind. Then he said to her: Tell me the origin of this your son. Which she did, and confessed that it was as he had said. When he returned to his colleagues and told them the discovery he had made, they said, Great is Akiba, who had corrected the rest of the masters.'

"An absolute fiction, the fruit of deep-rooted malice! Though no person is here named, there can be no doubt who is intended. And it is adopted by the author of Toldoth Jeschu."

His going down into Egypt is thus represented by the Talmudists:

"Upon Natt. ii. 14, Lightfoot observes as follows: 'There are some footsteps in the Talmudists of this journey of our Saviour into Egypt, but so corrupted with venemous blasphemy (as all their writings are), that they seem only to have confessed the truth that they might have matter more liberally to reproach him: for so they speak [Bap. Sanhedr. fol. 107, a]: 'When Jannay the king slew the rabbins, R. Joshua Ben Perachiah and Jesus went away unto Alexandria in Egypt. Simeon Ben Shela sent thither, speaking thus: From me Jerusalem, the holy city, to thee, O Alexandria in Egypt, my sister, health. My husband dwells with thee, while I in the meantime sit alone.—Therefore he rose up and went. And a little after he brought forth four hundred trumpets, and anathematized [Jesus]. And a little before that, Elizæus turned away Gehazi with both hands, and R. Joshua Ben Perachiah thrust away Jesus with both his hands.

"'And [Schabb., fol. 104, 2] did not Ben Stada bring enchantments out of Egypt in the cutting which was in his flesh?' Under Ben Stada they wound our Jesus with their reproaches."

His marvelous works are blasphemed by the Rabbins in the Talmud as quoted by Dr. Lightfoot.

"In the Mishnical tract called Schabbath, it is said: 'If any one, especially on the Sabbath, draws a line, or makes a cut in his flesh, he is obliged to bring a sin offering; but the wise men absolve him.' Upon which words it is remarked in the Gemara, a tradition; R. Eliezer said to the wise men: 'But did not the son of Stada bring magical arts out of Egypt, in a cutting in his flesh?' The Gloss says: 'The reason of that was, that he could not bring them away in writing, because the priests diligently searched all at their going away, that they might not carry out magical arts to teach them to men dwelling in other countries."

In an allusion to Matthew, James, John, and Judas, the paucity of Christ's disciples is sneered at by the Rabbins in the Babylonian Talmud.

"'The Rabbins have taught that there were five disciples of Jesus—Matthai, Nakai, Nezer, Boni, and Toda. When Matthai was brought forth [to be condemned to death], he said to his judges: Shall Matthai be slain? But it is written: When shall I come [Matai] and appear before God? (Ps. xlii. 2). But they answered: Yes, Matthai shall be slain. For it is written: When [Matai] shall he die, and his name perish? (Ps. xli. 5). When Nakai was brought out, he said: Shall Nakai be slain? But it is written: Thou shalt not kill the innocent [Nakai] and the just (Ex. xxiii. 7). But they said: Yes, Nakai shall be slain. For it is written: In the secret places does he murder the innocent [Nakai] (Ps. x. 8). When they brought forth Nezer, he said to them: And shall Nezer be slain? But it is written: A branch [Nezer] shall grow out of his roots (Is. xi. 1). But they answered: Yes, Nezer shall be slain. For it is written: Thou art cast out of thy grave as an abominable branch (Is. xiv. 19). When they brought out Boni, he said: And shall Boni be slain? But it is written: Israel is my son [Beni] even my first-born (Ex. iv. 22). But they said: Yes, Boni shall be slain. For it is written: Behold, I will slay thy son [Bincka], thy first-born (Ex. iv. 23). When they brought out Toda, he said to them: And shall Toda be slain? It is written: A psalm to praise [Lethoda] (Ps. c.) But they answered: Yes, Toda shall be slain. For it is written: Whoso offereth praise [Toda] glorifieth me.'"

Some have doubted whether James the Apostle be here alluded to. Lardner quotes the following passage from the Talmud in proof that he is one of the five who labored amongst the Jews; for he, with Lightfoot, thinks that the reason why *five* only are mentioned is because these labored most, and were therefore best known among the Jews.

"R. Akiba and Rabbi Eliezer are talking together. Eliezer says, 'O Akiba, you have brought something to my mind. As I was walking in the high street of Zipporis, I met one of the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, whose name is James, a man of the town of Shecaniah. He said to me: In your law it is written, Thou shalt not bring the hire of a harlot (Deut. xxiii. 18). I did not make him any answer. But he added, and said to me, Jesus of Nazareth taught me the meaning. She gathered it of the hire of a harlot; and they shall return to the hire of a harlot (Mic. i. 7). From an impure place they came, and to an impure place they shall return. Which interpretation (says Eliezer) did not displease me.'"

The death of the Messiah is malevolently misrepresented in the following words:

"These things are delivered in Sanhedrim [cap. vi., Hal. 4] of one that is guilty of stoning: If there be no defense found for him, they lead him out to be stoned, and a crier went before him, saying aloud thus: N. N. comes out to be stoned, because he has done so and so. The witnesses against him are N. N. Whosoever can bring anything in his defense, let him come forth and produce it. On which thus the Gemara of Babylon: The tradition is that on the evening of the passover, Jesus was hanged, and that a crier went before him for forty days making this proclamation. This man comes forth to be stoned, because he hath dealt in sorceries, and persuaded and seduced Israel. Whosoever knows of any defense for him, let him come forth and produce it. But no defense could be found: therefore they hanged him upon the evening of the passover. Ulla saith his case seemed not to admit of any defense, since he was a seducer, and of such God hath said, Thou shalt not spare him nor conceal him (Deut. xiii)."

"The Mishna, explaining Deut. xiii. and showing who is the seducer there spoken of, says, 'Of all that are adjudged

to die, to none of them are snares to be laid excepting a seducer: for, if he has attempted two and they bear witness against him, he is to be stoned.' Upon this it is said in the Gemara: 'Against none are snares to be laid, except against a seducer of the people [meaning one who seduces to idolatry]; and that is done after this manner. They light a candle in a closet or inner room and place witnesses in another room, so that they may see him and hear his voice, but he does not see them: there he, whom some time before he had endeavored to seduce (being with him) says to him, Repeat to me now in private what you before said to me. If he then repeats it the other says to him: How can we leave our God who is in the heavens, and serve idols? If he then owns his fault and repents, all is well. But if he says, This is our duty, and so we ought to do; the witnesses who are in the outer room carry him to the house of judgment and stone him. So they did to the son of Stada in Lud, and hanged him on the evening of the Passover. Rabbi Chasda said: The son of Stada is the son of Pandira ———His mother was Stada.———She was Mary the plaiter of woman's hair; as we say in Pompedita, she departed from her husband. In the Gloss it is said: She was so called because she transgressed the laws of chastity."

The allusion to Mary, under the profession of a plaiter of hair, is evidently to traduce her character.

From these extracts from the Mishna and the Talmuds, it may be seen that the following facts are alluded to:

1. The particular circumstances of the nativity of Jesus.
2. His flight into Egypt.
3. His miracles.
4. The publicity of some of his disciples among the Jews.
5. His ignominious sufferings and death.

The antipathy of the Jews against the Messiah, his cause, and people, was of the most deadly character. It seems they could not, with any sort of respect to truth or character, ever allude to him. They greatly preferred an affected contemptuous silence rather than debate. Experience had taught them that discussion was fatal to their views and wishes; and that their true policy was "to fight Christianity by letting it alone." The almost perfect silence of Josephus, and of all the early Jewish writers, on all

the splendid events in the evangelical history, may be perspicuously illustrated by the following anecdote:

The Congregationalists and the Baptists of Old England last year sent each a deputation of two ministers to visit the United States to ascertain the true state of religious society in the New World as respects doctrines, practices and parties; and then to report the same, truly and faithfully, to the nation of Great Britain. Accordingly, Messrs. Matheson and Reed, of the Congregational, and Messrs. Cox and Hoby, of the Baptist communities, made the tour of the New World, and returned to their respective bodies ecclesiastic. A voluminous report made by the Congregational deputation, of two volumes 8vo, and sold at $5.25 per copy, has been published; also, a miniature report by the Baptist deputation, the precursor of a more voluminous one. Now it happens that there is a community of Christians of from 100,000 to 150,000 members, having various periodical prints promulging their views through every State and Territory in the Union; which community professedly contends for the old gospel and institutions of the Christian Apostles, as promulged in their writings, without any other creed or platform than the inspired volumes. They happen, however, to be unpopular with the prominent leaders of these two sects, who have nicknamed their profession "*Campbellism*," though they renounced every leader but Christ, and every system but the new constitution. Moreover, these sects have found that discussion is singularly fatal to their cause, and they have in a great measure abandoned it. One of their Rabbins said: "The most *successful* way of fighting Campbellism is to let it alone." Well now, of the 800 or 900 pages of the Congregational report, purporting to inform the English nation very accurately of the state of Christianity in the United States (like Josephus' faithful account of the Jews down to the destruction of the temple), how many pages are devoted to the history of these myriads of Christians contending for the faith formerly delivered to the saints? Be not startled, courteous reader, to learn that there is not one-quarter of a page devoted to that people: the following is their whole history:

"In this disorganized state, *Mr. Campbell came amongst them* [*the Baptists*] *with his new lights, and nothing now is heard*

amongst them but Campbellism, as it is called. The people of this denomination, and especially the teachers, had made too much of their peculiarities as Baptists. Campbell came amongst them, and made everything of them, and has succeeded to an alarming extent. *He denounces every body; he unsettles every thing, and settles nothing;* and there is great present distraction and scandal."

And in the miniature report of the Baptist deputation, who love these Christians a little less than the Congregationalists, the following is the sum total of their allusions and views:

"In the State of Kentucky there was some distraction in the churches in consequence of the introduction of Campbellism."

Wonder not, then, you inquisitive, that Jesus Christ, the Apostles, and the ancient Christians obtain so few sentences in Josephus, Philo, the Mishna and the Talmuds of ancient times. Human nature still runs in her ancient channels.

PLINY THE YOUNGER, AND TRAJAN THE EMPEROR.

Caius Plinius Cecilius Secundus, or Pliny the younger, son of Lucius Cecilius and a sister of the elder Pliny, by whom he was adopted for his son, was born at Como, near Milan, in the year of Christ 61 or 62. He was prætor under Domitian, and afterwards præfect of the treasury of Saturn; which trust seems to have been conferred on him jointly by Nerva and Trajan. He was consul in the third year of the reign of Trajan, in the year of our Lord 100; when he pronounced his celebrated panegyric upon that emperor. He was also augur, and for awhile governor of Pontus and Bithynia. It is very probable that he did not survive Trajan, who died on the tenth of August, in the year 117. It is more reasonable to think that he died several years before him; forasmuch as there is nothing extant, either in his epistles, or elsewhere, that should induce us to think he lived long after his provincial government.

Pliny had not the title of proconsul, but was sent into the province by the emperor, as his lieutenant and propræ-tor, with proconsular power, as appears from some ancient inscriptions still remaining.

He was sent from Rome in the summer of the year 106. He went by the way of Ephesus, and arrived in Bithynia on the eighteenth of September, which was the genuine, or natural birthday of Trajan. He seems also in one of his epistles to speak of the same birthday in another year. Whilst he was in the province he twice celebrated the day of Trajan's accession, or the anniversary of his empire. The first time may have been on the 27th of January, in the year 107; the next, or second, on the same day of January, in the year 108. It is likely that he did not leave the province before the summer of that year. Consequently he was there eighteen months, or longer. According to this computation, Pliny's letter to Trajan, concerning the Christians, was written in 107, and the emperor's rescript, or answer to it, in the same year.

M. Alpinus Crinitus.Trajan, a Roman emperor. After serving under Vespasian and Titus in their Asiatic campaigns, and after supporting by his valor the power of Nerva, he was associated with him on the throne. He was a brave and popular prince, though he persecuted the Christians. He died in Cilicia, A. D. 117.

No. 1. *The testimony of Pliny in his letter to Trajan.*

"Pliny to the Emperor Trajan wisheth health and happiness.

"It is my constant custom, Sir, to refer myself to you in all matters concerning which I have any doubt. For who can better direct me where I hesitate, or instruct me where I am ignorant? I have never been present at any trials of Christians; so that I know not well what is the subject matter of punishment, or of inquiry, or what strictness ought to be used in either. Nor have I been a little perplexed to determine whether any difference ought to be made upon account of age, or whether the young and tender, and the full grown and robust, ought to be treated all alike; whether repentance should entitle to pardon, or whether all who have once been Christians ought to be punished, though they are now no longer so; whether the

name itself, although no crimes be detected, or crimes only belonging to the name, ought to be punished. Concerning all these things I am in doubt.

"In the meantime I have taken this course with all who have been brought before me and have been accused as Christians. I have put the question to them, whether they were Christians. Upon their confessing to me that they were, I repeated the question a second and third time, threatening also to punish them with death. Such as still persisted, I ordered away to be punished; for it was no doubt with me, whatever might be the nature of their opinion, that contumacy and inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished. There were others of the same infatuation whom, because they were Roman citizens, I have noted down to be sent to the city.

"In a short time, the crime spreading itself, even whilst under persecution, as is usual in such cases, divers sorts of people came in my way. An information was presented to me without mentioning the author, containing the names of many persons, who upon examination denied that they were Christians, or had ever been so: who repeated after me an invocation to the gods, and with wine and frankincense made supplication to your image, which for that purpose I have caused to be brought and set before them, together with the statues of the deities. Moreover, they reviled the name of Christ. None of which things, as is said, they who are really Christians can by any means be compelled to do. These, therefore, I thought proper to discharge.

"Others were named by an informer, who at first confessed themselves Christians, and afterwards denied it. The rest said they had been Christians, but had left them; some three years ago, some longer, and one, or more, above twenty years. They all worshiped your image, and the statues of the gods; these also reviled Christ. They affirmed that the whole of their fault, or error, lay in this, that they were wont to meet together on a stated day before it was light, and sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ, as a god, and bind themselves by an oath, not to the commission of any wickedness, but not to be guilty of theft, or robbery, or adultery, never to falsify

their word, nor to deny a pledge committed to them, when called upon to return it. When these things were performed it was their custom to separate, and then to come together again to a meal, which they ate in common, without any disorder: but this they had forborne since the publication of my edict, by which, according to your commands, I prohibited assemblies.

"After receiving this account I judged it the more necessary to examine, and that by torture, two maid-servants, which were called ministers. But I have discovered nothing, beside a bad and excessive superstition.

"Suspending therefore all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice: for it has appeared unto me a matter highly deserving consideration, especially upon account of the great number of persons who are in danger of suffering. For many of all ages, and every rank, of both sexes likewise, are accused, and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country. Nevertheless it seems to me that it may be restrained and corrected. It is certain that the temples, which were almost forsaken, begin to be more frequented. And the sacred solemnities, after a long intermission, are revived. Victims likewise are every where bought up, whereas for some time there were few purchasers. Whence it is easy to imagine what numbers of men might be reclaimed, if pardon were granted to those who shall repent."

So writes Pliny. We are now to observe the emperor's rescript.

"Trajan to Pliny wisheth health and happiness."

"You have taken the right method, my Pliny, in your proceedings with those who have been brought before you as Christians; for it is impossible to establish any one rule that shall hold universally. They are not to be sought for. If any are brought before you, and are convicted, they ought to be punished. However, he that denies his being a Christian, and makes it evident in fact, that is, by supplicating to our gods, though he be suspected to have been so formerly, let him be pardoned upon repentance. But in no case of any crime whatever may a bill of information be received without being signed by him who presents it: for

that would be a dangerous precedent, and unworthy of my government."

It may be observed here that the genuineness of these two letters is unquestioned. They are found with the other letters of Pliny to Trajan, and Trajan's letters to him. And they are both particularly mentioned by Tertullian, in his Apology for the Christians, and by Eusebius from him, not to mention any later writers.

Sum of the testimony of Pliny:

1. In this letter of Pliny it is affirmed that the Christians were persecuted.

2. That when some of them were threatened with death for their adherence to Christ, and when Pliny the president endeavored to intimidate them, repeatedly putting the question to them, whether they were Christians, still they persisted, until he ordered them away to be punished.

3. That none who were really Christians could, by *any means*, be compelled to make supplication to the image of Cæsar, or the statues of the gods.

4. That from some who apostatized, through cowardice or the love of the world, Pliny had learned that all the fault or error of the Christians lay in their devotion to Christ.

5. That they were wont to meet together on a stated day before it was light, to worship Christ as a god.*

6. That their worship consisted in part of singing hymns among themselves alternately to Christ.

7. That they also bound themselves by a sacrament or solemn oath (an allusion no doubt to the Lord's supper) to abstain from all wickedness, from theft, robbery, adultery, lying, and covenant breaking.

8. That they were accustomed to meet a second time on the stated day of worship for a social meal among them-

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*This is frequently spoken of in the first apologies to the emperor. Justin Martyr to Antoninus Pius speaks thus:

"On the day called Sunday we all meet together —— On which day Jesus Christ our Saviour arose from the dead. On the day before Saturday he was crucified. And on the day after Saturday, which is Sunday, he appeared to his apostles and disciples, and taught them those things which we have set before you, and refer to your consideration. If these things appear agreeable to reason and truth, pay a regard to them. If they appear trifling, reject them as such. But do not treat as enemies, nor appoint capital punishment to those who have done no harm: for we foretell unto you, that you will not escape the future judgment of God if you persist in unrighteousness."

selves, which was eaten in common, but without any disorder.

This being a love feast, and not of the same obligation as the positive institution of Christ, in consequence of the edict of the governor, which prohibited such assemblies, was laid aside for the time being.

9. That the Christian communities had ministers or servants.

10. That on examination, by torture, of two deaconesses, the proconsul could find nothing criminal in the Christians, "but a bad and excessive superstition."

11. That multitudes, including all sexes, ages, and *ranks* in Pontus and Bithynia, were accused of being Christians; and that such was the prevalence of this "excessive superstition" that the temples of the gods were almost deserted, and the victims found but few purchasers; within less than the life-time of one man, after the crucifixion of Jesus of Nazareth.

That the contagion of the gospel had seized, "not only the cities, but the lesser towns also, and the open country."

This representation of Pliny is confirmed by the answer of Trajan, who, on the whole premises above stated, issues an edict.

EPICTETUS AND ARRIAN.

Epictetus, born at Hierapolis in Phrygia, a philosopher, was slave to Epaphroditus, one of the Emperor Nero's bodyguards. He was lame in one leg, occasioned by a defluxion. He dwelt at Nicopolis, a city of New Epirus; and reached to the time of Marcus Antoninus. He wrote many things.

All the discourses of Epictetus, which we have, were delivered at Nicopolis, as is manifest. And from his settlement in that city to the death of Trajan, in the year 117, or thereabout, must be reckoned the time when he chiefly flourished.

I have chosen to place him at the twelfth of Trajan, and the one hundred and ninth year of our Lord.

Arrian was by profession a philosopher, and one of Epictetus' friends. He flourished in the times of Adrian,

Antoninus the Pious, and Marcus Antoninus. He was called the young Xenophon. On account of his uncommon abilities he was entrusted with divers civil employments, and attained to the dignity of the consulship. Besides those already mentioned, he wrote other works, as Dissertations of his master Epictetus, in eight books, so far as we know; and Homilies [or discourses] of the same Epictetus, in twelve books; and it must be owned that his style much resembles that of Xenophon.

It is from Arrian, who records the discourses of Epictetus the stoic philosopher, that we obtain the extracts which allude to our subject. Concerning the discourses of Epictetus he says to Lucius Gellius:

"I neither composed the discourses of Epictetus in such a manner as things of this nature are commonly composed, nor did I myself produce them to the public view any more than I composed them. But whatever sentiments I heard from his own mouth, the very same I endeavored to set down in the very same words, as far as possible, and preserve as memorials for my own use, of his manner of thinking, and freedom of speech.

"These discourses are such as one person would naturally deliver from his own thoughts extempore to another, not such as he would prepare to be read by numbers afterwards."

In these discourses there are two passages which have been supposed by many learned men to relate to the Christians.

"In the first, Epictetus blames those who assume the profession of philosophy, or any other character, without acting up to it. 'Why,' says he, 'do you call yourself a stoic? Why do you deceive the multitude? Why do you pretend to be a Greek, when you are a Jew? Do you not perceive upon what terms a man is called a Jew, a Syrian, an Egyptian? When we see a man inconstant to his principles, we say he is not a Jew, but only pretends to be so; but when he has the temper of a man dipped and professed, then he is indeed, and is called, a Jew. Even so we are counterfeits, Jews in name, but in reality something else.'

"In the other place Epictetus is speaking of intrepidity, or fearlessness, and particularly with regard to a tyrant,

surrounded by his guards and officers; he says: 'Is it possible that a man may arrive at this temper, and become indifferent to those things from madness, or from habit, as the Galileans, and yet that no one should be able to know by reason and demonstration that God made all things in the world——?'"

"Mrs. Carter, who translated the discourses of Epictetus, has a note upon this place: 'Epictetus,' says she, 'probably means not any remaining disciple of Judas of Galilee, but the Christians, whom Julian afterwards affected to call Galileans. It helps to cŏnfirm this opinion that M. Antoninus [1, 2, sec. 3.] mentions them by their proper name of Christian, as suffering death out of mere obstinacy.——Epictetus and Antoninus were too exact judges of human nature not to know that ignominy, tortures and death are not, merely on their own account, objects of choice. Nor could the records of any time or nation furnish them with an example of multitudes of persons of both sexes, of all ages, ranks, and natural dispositions, in distant countries, and successive periods, resigning whatever is most valuable and dear to the heart of man from a principle of obstinacy, or the mere force of habit; not to say that habit could have no influence on the first sufferers.'"

The testimony of Epictetus, as it comes to us through Arrian, is not of much value. If one were curious to collect, as Lardner and some others have been, every reference, direct and indirect, to the Christians in all *Jewish* and *Pagan* antiquity, such allusions are worthy of notice: and although singly they prove but little, yet collectively they make a strong argument. This not being precisely our aim, we shall pretermit some references and allusions, which many Christian writers have summoned to their aid. We have done so in various instances already; not indeed wholly disparaging such evidences; but because we deem them superfluous, even when placed in the boldest relief, in addition to those we have collected.

There is, however, in the extracts from Epictetus above quoted from Lardner, one thing worthy of especial notice, and whose genuineness, as far as known to us, has never been disputed. To appreciate its value, it ought to be observed that the Greeks and Romans were accustomed

sometimes to call the Christians Jews, because Jesus Christ was a Jew, his Apostles were Jews, and his religion began in Judea among the Jews. Many in those days regarded the gospel as a new system of Judaism, and its advocates a new sect of Jews; and, therefore, so nicknamed them.

Epictetus, a stoic philosopher, not very well acquainted with the gospel and the peculiar views of the Christians, but knowing that they made a profession of faith, and were dipped, and had a temper and manners peculiar to themselves, uses them to point his moral, and to adorn his argument in favor of consistency.

His words are in this view worth a volume: "But when he has a *temper* of a man *dipped* and *professed*, then he is *indeed*, and is *called*, a Jew. Now as professing and dipping belonged only to such Jews as embraced the gospel, in my judgment there can be no misunderstanding of the people intended by this philosopher; and as persons are not accustomed to illustrate an argument or to exemplify a subject by an illusion to that which is obscure or little known, we can not but logically infer that the Christian profession, the Christian dipping, and the Christian temper, all peculiarities, were matters of great notoriety in the year 109, among those Greeks in whose language Epictetus wrote, and to whose philosophers he addressed himself.

THE EMPEROR ADRIAN.

Publius Ælius Adrianus, or the Emperor Adrian, was born at Rome on the twenty-fourth day of January, in the year of Christ 76, and died on the tenth day of July, in the year 138, being then more than sixty-two years of age. He reigned twenty years and eleven months, from the death of Trajan, on the tenth or eleventh day of August in 117.

As I may not enlarge either on his character or history, it may be best for me to be quite silent. I shall only say that both have been written by ancient Roman and Greek authors with great freedom: and that he is reckoned one of those princes who had great virtues and great vices. He is also represented to have been very various and in-

Adrian is not generally reckoned among the persecuting emperors, because he published no new edicts against them. But Trajan's edict was still in force. Many Christians therefore might suffer in his reign, as there certainly did. Jerome supposes that the persecution in his reign was for a while very violent, and that it was moderated upon occasion of the apologies which Quadratus and Aristides presented to Adrian at Athens. These apologies we have dated in the year of Christ 126. Sulpicius Severus places the fourth persecution in his reign. But he allows that the same emperor afterwards restrained it, referring, as it seems, to the rescript which shall be produced at length hereafter. Orosius does not number him among the persecuting emperors, and places the fourth persecution in the time of Marcus Antoninus.

We are informed by Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, that Serenius Granianus, proconsul, wrote to Adrian, that it seemed to him unjust that the Christians should be put to death only to gratify the clamors of the people, without trial, and without any crime proved against them: and that Adrian, in answer to that letter, wrote to Minucius Fundanus, proconsul of Asia, ordering that no man should be put to death without a judicial process, and a legal trial.

It is manifest, from the conclusion of Justin Martyr's first Apology, which was presented to Antoninus the Pious, and the senate of Rome, that the rescript of Adrian was subjoined to it. And from Eusebius we know that it was in Latin. He translated it into Greek, and inserted it into his Ecclesiastical History; whence we have it, and whence it has been put at the end of Justin's Apology, in the same language, the Latin original being lost.

The reason why this rescript was sent to Minucius Fundanus, is supposed to be that Serenius' letter to the emperor was not written till the time of his government was near expiring.

Besides Justin Martyr's early and express authority, this rescript is also mentioned by Melito in his Apology to Marcus Antoninus, whom he reminds that his grandfather Adrian had written in their favor, as to others, so particularly to Fundanus, proconsul of Asia. This rescript is also

referred to by Sulpicius Severus, as before observed; the genuineness of it therefore is indubitable.

It is very reasonably supposed that, beside the letter of Serenius Granianus, the apologies of Quadratus and Aristides, presented about the same time, contributed to procure this favorable rescript. As much is plainly hinted in Jerome's Latin edition of Eusebius' Chronicle. I now proceed to translate it literally from the Greek of Eusebius.

"Adrian to Minucius Fundanus: I have received a letter written to me by the illustrious Serenius Granianus, whom you have succeeded. It seems then to me that this is an affair which ought not to be passed over without being examined into; if it were only to prevent disturbance being given to the people, and that room may not be left for informers to practice their wicked arts. If, therefore, the people of the province will appear publicly, and in a legal way charge the Christians, that they may answer for themselves in court, let them take that course, and not proceed by importunate demands and loud clamors only. For it is much the best method, and if any bring accusations, that you should take cognizance of them. If then any one shall accuse and make out anything contrary to the laws, do you determine according to the nature of the crime: but by Hercules, if the charge be only a calumny, do you take care to punish the author of it with the severity it deserves."

By "importunate demands and loud clamors," or in other words, by "clamorous petitions," learned men generally understand the popular cry of those times, "The Christians to the lions!" Nor was it an unusual thing, as Valesius observes in his note upon the place, for the people at Rome, or in the provinces, in the time of public shows, when they were got together in the theater, by their loud cries and a tumultuous behavior to gain their will of the presidents, and even of the emperor himself. This method had been practiced against the Christians. And it is likely that men were often brought before the presidents with general accusations, without distinct proofs. The emperor was apprehensive that evil minded men should sometimes hurry on to death men who were not Christians. Therefore he directs the proconsul that no men should be punished as

Christians, without a fair and public trial before himself in court.

The emperor's orders are obscure. "If any one accuse and make out anything contrary to the laws, do you determine," or punish, "according to the nature of the crime." Some may be apt to think that the emperor now appointed that none should be punished for being Christians, unless some real crime were alleged and proved upon them. But that does not clearly appear to be the meaning. Nor can we reasonably suppose that Trajan's edict is here repealed; according to which, if a man were accused and proved to be a Christian, a president is required to punish him unless he recant. Nevertheless, this rescript must be allowed to have been beneficial to the Christians. Several ancient writers, as we have seen, say that afterwards the persecution, which before had been violent, was restrained and moderated.

The Christians were hereby taken out of the hands of the common people and tumultuous rabble, and brought before the governors of provinces to be examined in open court, and not to be condemned without evidence. This must have been considerable advantage to men who were much disliked by the generality of their neighbors, as the Christians were.

Melito, as before quoted, says that "Adrian wrote in favor of the Christians, as to divers others, so particularly to Fundanus, proconsul of Asia." By which we are led to understand that this rescript was sent to other governors of provinces, as well as to Fundanus; or that this rescript sent to him was to be the rule of conduct, not to him only, but to other governors likewise.

From this rescript, and from the letter which gave occasion to it, we learn that there were then Christians in Asia. It is probable they were there in great numbers; for the affair appeared worthy of the emperor's consideration. But Christianity, as is apparent, was odious to the generality of people in that country; therefore men must have had some good reasons for embracing a profession which rendered them obnoxious to their neighbors.

From what we have seen of Quadratus and Aristides, two learned Christian apologists, and the Emperor Adrian,

and also Serenius and Fundanus, two governors of the province of Asia, it may be concluded with certainty that the Christians were now well known to the Roman emperors, and throughout the Roman Empire. Indeed the Christians diligently embraced all favorable opportunities to make themselves, and their own innocence, and the principles of their religion, and the grounds and reasons for their belief, well known to all men, and especially to the emperors and other magistrates. By that means they propagated their religion, and gradually wiped off the calumnies that had been invented against them, and with which they were loaded for a while. Quadratus and Aristides presented their apologies to Adrian, at the time of the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries at Athens, when there was a concourse of men of all ranks, especially of the highest, and of the most eminent, and most distinguished for their learning, and zeal for the established rights.

At that very time those apologists made public appearance, and pleaded the cause of their religion, and of their brethren, the professors of it. Nor did they make a contemptible figure. Their discourses were rational, eloquent and persuasive; and they were followed by a relaxation of the violence of the persecution, which for some while had raged in several provinces, through the prevailing animosity of the people; and it is particularly observed by Eusebius, in his Evangelical Preparation, "In the reign of Adrian the Christian religion shone out in the eyes of all men."

There are others besides our two apologists who are entitled to applause in this place. Serenius Granianus is styled by Adrian, in his rescript, "an illustrious man," and by Jerome, in his Chronicle, "a truly noble person." We can not but believe that he was a man of a generous mind, a lover of justice and equity, who pleaded the cause of the Christians when the current ran violently against them. His successor, Fundanus, to whom the rescript was sent, may have been a man of a like disposition. Nor can we forbear saying somewhat here to the honor of the Emperor Adrian. It does not appear that he ever issued out any orders for persecuting the Christians. The persecution which they had suffered in the beginning of his reign was

owing to the blind bigotry and violence of the common people. When the proconsul of Asia sent him a letter, representing the hardships which Christians lay under, beyond most other men, he sent a favorable rescript, which could not but be, and actually was, of advantage to them; and he received the apologies of Quadratus and Aristides in behalf of a despised and persecuted people, without resentment. So far from being provoked at their importunity, he gratified their request, and moderated the displeasure of men against those whose cause they had pleaded. If moderation be a virtue (as it certainly is), it is more especially commendable in men of power and of high station.

A passage, formerly omitted, shall now be transcribed from the Apology of Quadratus, which probably was the first written apology presented to a Roman emperor. It is in these very words: "The works of our Saviour were always conspicuous, for they were real; both they that were healed, and they that were raised from the dead, who were seen not only when they were healed, or raised, but for a long time afterwards; not only whilst he dwelt on this earth, but also after his departure, and for a good while after it; insomuch that some of them have reached to our times." Jerome supposes that Quadratus himself saw several of those persons who had been the subjects of our Saviour's miracles.

Besides the rescript, there is a letter of Adrian to Servianus, husband of Paulina, the emperor's sister, who was consul in 134. It is preserved by Vopiscus, one of the writers of the Augustan history, who flourished about the year 300. Adrian had been some while in Egypt. Having left it, when he got into Syria he wrote that letter to his brother-in-law, in the year 134. I shall transcribe it from the historian, with the connection:

"The Egyptians, as you well know," says Vopiscus, "are vain, fond of innovations, men of all characters — for there are among them Christians and Samaritans, and such as take a prodigious liberty in censuring the present times. That none of the Egyptians may be offended with me, I shall produce a letter of Adrian, taken from the books of Phlegon, his freed-man, in which the character of the

Egyptians is clearly represented. 'Adrian Augustus to the consul Servianus wisheth health. I have found Egypt, my dear Servianus, which you commended to me, all over fickle and inconstant, and continually shaken by the slightest reports of fame. The worshipers of Serapis are Christians, and they are devoted to Serapis, who call themselves Christ's bishops. There is no ruler of the Jewish synagogue, no Samaritan, no presbyter of the Christians, no mathematician, no soothsayer, no anointer: even the patriarch, if he should come to Egypt, would be required by some to worship Serapis, by others Christ. A seditious and turbulent sort of men. However the city is rich and populous. Nor are any idle. Some are employed in making glass, others paper, others in weaving linen. They have one God—him the Christians, him the Jews, him all the Gentile people worship.'"

It can not be needful for me to explain all the several sorts of people here spoken of. Nor ought it to be thought strange that Christians share in the emperor's satire, and are represented by him as fickle and inconstant, like the other Egyptians. It appears from this letter that the Christians were numerous at Alexandria, and in other parts of Egypt, when Adrian was in that country: which, certainly, is very remarkable, that in a century after the resurrection of Jesus he should have so many followers in Asia and Egypt, as is manifest from this one emperor's authentic writings. Without any countenance from the civil government, and under a great deal of opposition from it, as well as from most other ranks of men, and especially from the lower sort of people, Christ's bishops were already become as considerable as the priests of Serapis.

In addition to all that is here quoted from Lardner, from whom we have copied this notice of Adrian, we need only say, that besides the references to matters before repeated, from the letter of Adrian it appears that in his time the Christians had formed themselves into communities in proconsular Asia and Egypt, and had selected officers, then designated as presbyters or bishops. Pliny notices the deacons, and Adrian the bishops of the Christian communities. So that we see the Christian church and its officers were matters known and discoursed of by Roman govern-

ors and emperors, within one lifetime of the crucifixion of the Messiah!

THE EMPEROR TITUS ANTONINUS THE PIOUS.

Titus Aurelius Fulvius Boionius Antoninus Pius, or Antoninus, surnamed the Pious, or the Good, was born in the reign of Domitian, in the year of Christ 86. He succeeded Adrian on the tenth day of July, in the year of our Lord 138, and died on the seventh of March in 161, in the 23rd year of his reign.

He is much commended; and indeed seems to have been a man of as fair a character as any of the Roman emperors, not excepting the most admired. And though he was about seventy years of age at the time of his death, he was as much lamented as if he had died in the prime of life.

When Xiphilinus made the epitome of Dion Cassius' History, the seventeenth book of that work, which contained the reign of this emperor, was wanting, excepting only a small part at the beginning. Having given a short account of that, Xiphilinus proceeds: "It is agreed by all that Antoninus was a good and mild prince, who was oppressive neither to any of his subjects, nor to the Christians, whom he protected and favored even beyond what had been done by Adrian, as is shown by Eusebius Pamphili."

So writes Xiphilinus. We are therefore led directly to the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius, in which is the earliest account we can expect to find of Antoninus' regard for the Christians.

He is not reckoned among the persecuting emperors, nevertheless the Christians were persecuted in his time; otherwise there could have been no occasion to present apologies to him; and that Justin's first apology was addressed to him is allowed. It is inscribed in this manner: "To the Emperor Titus Ælius Adrianus Antoninus the pious, and to his son Verissimus, and Lucius, and the senate, and all the people of the Romans, in behalf of men gathered out of all nations, who are unjustly hated and

ill-treated, I, Justin, son of Priscus, son of Bacchius, one of them of the city of Flavia Neapolis, in that part of Syria which is called Palestine, make this address and supplication."

And not to take notice of any other passages of it, the same apology concludes in this manner "If what has been now offered be material, pay a suitable regard to it; but if all this be of no moment, let it be slighted as trifling: but do not treat as enemies, and appoint death for men who are guilty of no crimes. And we foretell unto you that ye will not escape the future judgment of God if you persist in this injustice."

Which plainly shows that the Christians were persecuted even to death.

Eusebius having given an account of Justin's apology, and quoted the beginning of it, goes on: "And the same emperor having been applied to by other of the brethren in Asia, complaining of the many injuries which they suffered from the people of the country, sent an edict to the common council of Asia, which is to this purpose: 'The emperor — to the states of Asia sendeth greeting. I am well satisfied the gods will not suffer such men to be concealed: for undoubtedly they are more concerned to punish those who refuse to worship them than you are. But you only confirm those men in their sentiments, and make them more obstinate by calling them impious, and giving them vexation: for they are not so desirous to live, as to be prosecuted and suffer death for their God. Hence they come off victorious, laying down their lives rather than do what you demand of them. As for the earthquakes of the former or the present times, it may not be improper to advise you to compare yourselves with them, and your sentiments with theirs; for when such things happen you are dejected, but they are full of confidence in God: and you in the ignorance you are in, neglect the other gods and their rites, and the worship of the Immortal likewise: and the Christians, who worship him, you banish and persecute to death. Before our time many governors of provinces wrote to our deified father about these men. To whom he wrote that they should not be molested, unless they did things contrary to the welfare of the Roman government. Many

also have informed me about the same men; to whom I returned an answer agreeable to the rescript of my father [Adrian]. If therefore any person will still accuse any of these men as such [as a Christian], let the accused be acquitted, though he appear to be such an one [that is, a Christian]; and let the accuser be punished. Set up at Ephesus in the common assembly of Asia.' And that these things were so done," adds Eusebius, "is attested by Melito, bishop of Sardis, who flourished about that time, in what he says in his excellent apology, which he made for our religion to the Emperor Verus."

Melito's apology was presented to Marcus Antoninus about the year 177. From that apology Eusebius, in a following chapter, makes a large extract, a part of which I also must transcribe here, reserving the rest till hereafter: "Of all the Roman emperors," says Melito to Marcus, "Nero and Domitian only, who were misled by designing men, have shown enmity to our religion. From them have proceeded the evil reports concerning us, that are received and propagated by the vulgar; which have often been checked by your pious ancestors, who by edicts have restrained those who have been troublesome to men of our religion. Among whom is your grandfather Adrian, who wrote, as to many others, so particularly to Minucius Fundanus, proconsul of Asia. And your father also, at the same time that you governed all things with him, wrote to several cities, that they should not give us any vexation, and among them to the Larisseans, and the Thessalonians, and the Athenians, and to all the Greeks. And we are persuaded that you, who can not but have the like regard for us, and are yet of a more humane and philosophical disposition, will grant all we desire."

From the authentic documents yet extant of Antoninus Pius, it appears:

1. That the Christians were a large community gathered out of all nations—"unjustly hated and ill treated."

2. That they were persecuted to death by the pagan and polytheistic emperors.

3. That persecution was rather chosen than eluded by the Christians in the time of Adrian and Antoninus.

4. That in the public calamities that befell the Roman

Empire, such as earthquakes, etc., the Christians were easily distinguished from all others, by their confidence in God, and their equanimity.

5. This faith in God, and consequent exemption from the pusillanimity of the heathen, was so conspicuous that it reached the ears of the emperors, and furnished them with the best reasons to abandon all persecution of the Christians; as those who could not be affrighted in the most tremendous convulsions and agonies of nature, were not to be forced from their religion by civil prosecutions, and persecution even to death.

6. That the Christians, in worshiping one God, were, in the judgment of the emperor, more pious than they who professed to do homage to so many.

7. That many governors of provinces had written to his predecessor touching the Christians; hence their cause was one of very general notoriety before the year 138.

8. The rescript of Adrian is farther confirmed by the testimony of this emperor.

MARCUS ANTONINUS.

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Philosophus, or Marcus Antoninus, surnamed the Philosopher, was born in the reign of Adrian, the 26th day of April, in the year of Christ 121. He succeeded Antoninus the Pius on the 2nd day of March, in the year of our Lord 161, and died on the 17th day of March, in the year 180.

The virtues of his private and public life have been greatly commended and highly celebrated; but if a comparison were to be made between Antoninus the Pious and Antoninus the Philosopher, I should be disposed to give the preference to the former.

Aristides the Sophist, in his panegyric upon this emperor, says that "before he came to the empire he restrained and prevented many disorders and mismanagements in the government of public affairs"; and insinuates that "great injuries were done and many things carried with violence and insult." But, as Tillemont observes, "Aristides seems to have aimed to decry the government

of Antoninus, in order to extol that of Marcus. But," as he adds, "the sophist therein showed greater regard to the laws of oratory than of truth. For, according to historians, Marcus did not at all excel Antoninus in moderation and the care of the public."

Some other learned men have formed a like judgment concerning this emperor.

There is still remaining a work of this emperor in twelve books, which we generally call his Meditations. They must have been put together at several times as he had leisure. However, some have computed that they were composed before the year 175.

In the eleventh book of that work there is an observation which I shall now transcribe and place here.

"What a soul is that which is prepared, even now presently, if needful, to be separated from the body, whether it be to be extinguished, or to be dispersed, or to subsist still. But this readiness must proceed from a well weighed judgment, not from mere obstinacy, like the Christians. And it should be done considerately, and with gravity, without tragical exclamat ons, and so as to persuade another."

The corollaries to be drawn from this passage are several; but they will be all easily admitted after what has been already said.

1. At that time the Christians were well known in the world.

2. The Emperor Marcus was well acquainted with them, and had often heard of their sufferings. He knew that many Christians had died in testimony to their principles, and as Christians; and that the sufferings which they had undergone were in common estimation very grievous.

3. He knew, and here acknowledgeth, their resolution and steadiness in the profession of their principles for which they suffered death. This he calls obstinacy.

4. He had heard of their cheerfulness in death and in all the sufferings which they had met with. This he endeavors to disparage by comparing it to the declamations of tragedies.

5. He was also persuaded of their innocence, or freedom from promiscuous lewdness and other gross crimes in

their assemblies, with which they were charged by some. If he had known and believed that they had practiced such things, he would have expressed himself very differently.

6. He despised and scorned the Christians as a mean, illiterate, and unphilosophical set of men.

7. He was not at all inclined to interpose in their behalf, either for preventing or mitigating their sufferings. Once more:

8. I must beg leave to observe that we can hence infer that the Christian scriptures were as yet held in contempt by the wise and great men of this world. The books of the New Testament were all published and bound together in two codes or volumes, one called Gospels, the other Epistles, before Marcus Antoninus was born; and they were in the hands of great numbers of his subjects, and were highly prized, and diligently read and studied by them. But he had never read them, nor perhaps ever seen them. They might, possibly, be well known to some of the philosophers, his masters: but they knew how to be silent and to keep their disciple in ignorance about what they did not desire he should know. Hence this great man, in the midst of light, was in darkness; he had no just apprehensions concerning a life to come.

LUCIAN OF SAMOSATA.

Lucian was a native of Samosata in Syria. According to Suidas, he flourished in the time of Trajan and afterwards; but that is placing him too early. It is more probable that he was born under Adrian; and he may be more properly said to have flourished in the reigns of Antoninus the Pious, and M. Antoninus the philosopher; which last he survived, as appears from his Pseudomantis, where he speaks of that emperor as already deified.

Some have supposed that in the latter part of his life Lucian was governor of Egypt; on the other hand, divers learned men have shown that he was only register of Alexandria. However, he speaks of that post as both honorable and profitable, and a step to higher preferment, no less

than the government of a province. Some have spoken of Lucian as an apostate from Christianity, but there is no sufficient reason to believe that he ever was a Christian.

Lucian is placed by Cave at the year 176; and I shall place him there likewise; which is some while after writing his Peregrinus, and several years before publishing his Pseudomantis, another work to be quoted hereafter.

The work to be first quoted by me is a letter to Cronius, concerning the death of Peregrinus, called also Proteus; who publicly burned himself in the sight of all Greece, soon after the Olympic games were over, in the year of our Lord 165, or as others say, in the year 169; not long after which this history of him was written by Lucian.

Peregrinus, according to Lucian's character of him, was a person who rambled from place to place, and from one sect of philosophy to another. Having been guilty of parricide, and other crimes, as our author says, he was obliged for a while to leave his native country, and travel abroad. "At which time," as Lucian says, "he learned the wonderful doctrine of the Christians, by conversing with their priests and scribes near Palestine; and in a short time he showed they were but children to him; for he was prophet, high-priest, ruler of a synagogue, uniting all offices in himself alone. Some books he interpreted and explained, others he wrote; and they spoke of him as a god, and took him for a lawgiver, and honored him with the title of master. They therefore still worship that great man who was crucified in Palestine, because he introduced into the world this new religion. For this reason Proteus was taken up, and put into prison; which very thing was of no small service to him afterwards, for giving reputation to his impostures, and gratifying his vanity. The Christians were much grieved for his imprisonment, and tried all ways to procure his liberty. Not being able to effect that, they did him all sorts of kind offices, and that not in a careless manner, but with the greatest assiduity; for even betimes in the morning there would be at the prison old women, some widows, and also little orphan children; and some of the chief of their men, by corrupting the keepers, would get into the prison, and stay the whole night there with

him; there they had a good supper together, and their sacred discourses. And this excellent Peregrinus (for so he was still called) was thought by them to be an extraordinary person, no less than another Socrates; even from the cities of Asia some Christians came to him by an order of the body, to relieve, encourage, and comfort him. For it is incredible what expedition they use when any of their friends are known to be in trouble. In a word, they spare nothing upon such an occasion; and Peregrinus' chain brought him in a good sum of money from them; for these miserable men have no doubt but they shall be immortal, and live for ever; therefore they contemn death, and many surrender themselves to sufferings. Moreover, their first lawgiver has taught them that they are all brethren, when once they have turned and renounced the gods of the Greeks, and worship that master of theirs who was crucified, and engage to live according to his laws. They have also a sovereign contempt for all the things of this world, and look upon them as common, and trust one another with them without any particular security; for which reason any subtle fellow, by good management, may impose upon this simple people, and grow rich among them. But Peregrinus was set at liberty by the governor of Syria, who was a favorer of philosophy: who perceiving his madness, and that he had a mind to die in order to get a name, let him out, not judging him so much as worthy of punishment." "Then," as our author says, "Peregrinus returned to his native place, Parium, in hopes of recovering his father's estate; but meeting with difficulties, he made over to the Parians all the estate he might expect from his father; who then extolled him as the greatest of philosophers, a lover of his country, and another Diogenes, or Crates. He then went abroad again, well supplied by the Christians with all traveling charges, by whom also he was accompanied; and he lived in great plenty. Thus it went with him for some while. At length they parted, having given them also some offense, by eating, as I suppose, some things not allowed by them."

Sum of his testimony:

Peregrinus was an old man when he threw himself into the flames in the year 165, or 169. I apprehend that the

time of his Christianity was the early part of his life; and that his imprisonment on that account must have been in the time of Tra an, or Adrian at the latest. He was best known by the name of Proteus; but, as Lucian says, whilst he was with the Christians he was called Peregrinus. And it is manifest, from all the remaining writers who mention him, that he sustained the character of a philosopher and a cynic. It is probable, therefore, that in the greatest and the latest part of his life he was a mere heathen philosopher, and it is reasonable that a man's denomination should be taken from that part of his life which was best known. Lucian himself allows that, after having been some while among the Christians, he and they parted.

Here is an authentic testimony to some of the main facts and principles of Christianity from a man of free sentiments, not long after the middle of the second century, who knew the world, and was well acquainted with mankind:

1. That the founder of the Christian religion was crucified in Palestine.

2. That he was the great master of the Christians, and the first author of the principles received by them.

3. That those men, called Christians, had peculiarly strong hopes of immortal life, and a great contempt for this world and its enjoyments.

4. That they courageously endured many afflictions upon account of their principles, and sometimes surrendered themselves to sufferings.

5. Honesty and probity prevailed so much among them, that they trusted each other without security.

6. Their master had earnestly recommended to all his followers mutual love; by which also they were much distinguished.

7. And their assiduity in relieving and comforting one another, when under affliction, was known to all men; nor is it, I presume, any disparagement to them that they were imposed upon by Peregrinus, who was admired by many others; and, perhaps, was not so bad a man as Lucian insinuates.

To these may be added an evident allusion to the 21st and 22nd chapters of the Apocalypse, showing that the book of Revelation was well known and read A. D. 176.

I shall now cite a passage taken from the second book of of what our author calls True History, but is indeed all fiction, as is acknowledged by himself at the beginning of the first book.

"He and his companions, having traveled a great way, came to the Island of the Blessed, where Rhadamanthus of Crete reigned. Soon after they came ashore, they were taken into custody, and were bound with roses, there being no other chains in that country; which too fell off of themselves, when they were set at liberty. There were then several causes to be tried before the king of the country; theirs was the fourth in order. When their cause came on, they were asked, how they came to be there, when they were yet living? When they had related their voyage, they were ordered to withdraw. The judge, having consulted with his assessors and counselors, determined that after death they should be punished for their curiosity and presumption; for the present they might converse with the heroes of the country, but the term of their sojourning there might not exceed seven months. Then they were conducted into the city, which is all gold, surrounded by a wall of emerald (Rev. xx). There are seven gates made of the wood of cinnamon: the pavement of the city, and the ground within the wall, is ivory; the temples of all the gods are built of the beryl stone; the altars in them are very large, consisting of one stone only, which is the amethyst, upon which they offer hecatombs. Round the city flows a river of the finest oil, the breadth of which is an hundred royal cubits the depth, such as is most convenient for swimming in. Their baths are large houses of glass, kept warm with fires made of cinnamon; instead of water they have warm dew in basins; their dress is purple, made of the finest spiders' webs. None grow old here; but they remain as they were when they arrived. They have no night, nor altogether bright day; but such light as precedes the rising of the sun; nor have they more than one season of the year; for it is always spring, and the west is the only wind. The country abounds with all sorts of flowers and plants, which are always flourishing; their vines bear twelve times in the year, yielding fruit every month, called by them minous. In-

stead of corn, the stalks have ready-prepared loaves at their tops like mushrooms. There are in the city three hundred and sixty-five fountains of water, and as many of honey, and five hundred fountains of oil, but less; seven rivers of milk, and eight of wine."

As we are now about to examine a still more satisfactory class of witnesses, not only, like the former, aliens from the Christian cause, but the prime leaders of the alien forces, positively and actively inimical, we shall briefly scan the outlines of the testimony already heard, and see what is the sum:

1. That in the time of Herod the Great, king of Judea, appeared an illustrious reformer named John the Baptist.

2. That the political condition of Judea, Galilee, Samaria, Syria, in the times of the New Testament, was such as represented by the Christian historians, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

3. That in those days a general expectation obtained all over the East, that in Judea should arise some person who would obtain the empire of all the world; and that this expectation had its foundation in the books of the Prophets.

4. That Jesus, who is called *Christ*, was born in Judea, in the reign of Augustus Cæsar.

5. That he is the founder of the sect called Christians.

6. That the religion which he taught was introduced by extraordinary means—"a *new* and *magical* superstition," and began in Judea.

7. That the circumstances of the nativity of Jesus were extraordinary—his earthly parentage humble and obscure.

8. That he was, while an infant, carried down into Egypt because of persecution, but as soon as the persecution ceased he was brought back.

9. That he, by some means, performed wonderful actions, as well as taught a doctrine wholly new.

10. That he collected some disciples in Judea, who, from humble birth and circumstances, became conspicuous in Judea, and other provinces of the Roman Empire.

11. That under the procuratorship of Pontius Pilate in Judea, and by his authority, Jesus was publicly executed as a criminal, while Tiberius was emperor at Rome.

12. That "this superstition" was then checked for a while, but afterwards broke out again, and spread, not only over all Judea and the neighboring provinces, but even to Rome; where, in the time of Tacitus, there was an immense multitude of them.

13. That this religion was opposed by the government of Judea and of Rome; and its advocates and professors persecuted, even to the most cruel and ignominious deaths, by Nero, Domitian, and other Roman emperors.

14. That the Jewish state was dissolved, the city and temple destroyed, with an immense slaughter of the people; that multitudes of the prisoners were sold into slavery, and dispersed all over the world, according to the predictions of Moses, and of Christ and his apostles.

15. That the Christians were a people who made a confession of their faith—were baptized—met on a stated day to worship Christ: that in their meetings they bound themselves by the solemnities of their religion to abstain from all evil and to practice all good; and had their social feasts as a separate religious community: that they would not make any compromise with the worship of idolatrous Gentiles, which was regarded by the Roman magistrates, philosophers, and priests as an "excessive superstition," an obstinacy, a crime worthy of condign punishment: that their communities were organized bodies, having two classes of officers—those called elders or bishops, and those called deacons or servants of the congregation: and that all sorts of people, Jews, Gentiles, Barbarians, of all castes, conditions, and circumstances, gladly embraced this religion; and at the risk and sacrifice of the friendship of the world, of the affection of their relatives, of their property, and even of their lives, confessed their faith in Christ; and for the hope of immortality, gladly renounced all the enjoyments of this life; and finally that these Christians greatly loved each other, were kind to all men, and from their excessive benevolence and sympathy were liable to be imposed upon; insomuch that many joined them because of the advantage to be derived from their unparalleled humanity.

All this at least, and more than all this, we glean from Jews, Greeks, and Romans, who disbelieved the divine mission of Jesus of Nazareth. We have, out of all Jewish and

pagan antiquity, only as yet heard, with much attention, Josephus, the Mishna, the Talmuds, Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny, Trajan, Adrian, the two Antonines, and Lucian of Samosata. We have quoted a few others; but on those named, we principally, if not exclusively, rely for all the facts above narrated; which, indeed, in all their meaning and bearings, give a pretty full view of all that the New Testament itself records and enforces. Thus have we, at least in part, shown *that the gospel facts are sustained by the testimony of unbelieving Jews and pagans;* and by the most renowned names on the page of Roman history—by their most distinguished historians, governors, and emperors.

CELSUS.

Having heard a principal part of the Jewish and pagan testimony, concerning the Christian facts and doctrine, down to the year 176, including about one century from the destruction of Jerusalem, we are now to examine a still more interesting and important class of documents, or rather to hear witnesses, who were not only unbelievers and enemies in common with the witnesses already heard, but who employed means still more efficient and permanently operative to subdue the Christian cause. These distinguished opponents of the gospel arrayed against it all their learning, talents, and influence, in written essays, using all the weapons of wit, ridicule, argument, philosophy, against the faith and hope of Christians. Having the superstitious ears of idolatrous Gentiles on their side, possessing the favor and patronage of those in power, enjoying all the advantages of the literature and philosophy of the Augustan age, these eminent writers occupied a vantage ground in opposing the gospel, never equaled, certainly never surpassed, by any who undertook to crush a new doctrine, or aimed at holding in subjection to reigning systems an infatuated multitude. Yet, the Lord be praised! they failed, and were completely foiled before the awful tribunal of public opinion; so that their writings are now found preserved only in the books of the very men whom they sought to destroy.

Thus Celsus, the famous Epicurean philosopher, of the middle or latter part of the second century, is only found in the eight books of the celebrated Origen, who has written as full a refutation of him as he attempted in relation to the Christian doctrine. It is, indeed, very fortunate that, as the custom then was, Origen has quoted very largely from Celsus: very often he is permitted, in his own words, to state his argument against the Messiah, and to pour out in full measure his hatred to the rising honors of the crucified benefactor of mankind. Often, too, Origen has given in his own language, at least in part, condensed views of the ground he occupies in attacking our faith; so that from the quotations, direct and indirect, we have a full view of this most ancient and most valuable of all the assaults made by the ancient philosophers upon the doctrine of the cross.

Of the early and most ancient adversaries of the Christians, Celsus, Porphyry and Julian are the most famous. These are the originals; others, who follow them, are rather c pyists than authors. It is unnecessary to our object to descend the stream of history ecclesiastic, or political, farther down than the times of Celsus; because, in little more than another century, Christianity triumphed in the Roman Empire over all its foes, and became as public and as general as the Roman name and people. But it will be gratifying to see from these three the whole ground occupied by the first writers who opposed the gospel.

Of all that ever wrote against the Christians, Celsus, not merely because he wrote first, but because of his standing, talen s and opportunities of assailing the cause, is most deserving of being heard. Every thing was then fresh, and easy of investigation; he had the best opportunities, and could select the best means of exposing its falsehood, if falsehood there were in it. He, however, contrary to all his wishes, has done more to establish the invincible truth of the gospel than any advocate of Christianity that has lived since his day. The following notice of him is from the pen of Lardner:

"The book which Celsus wrote against the Christians was entitled 'The True Word.' Origen says he had understood that there were two of this name, who were Epicu-

reans: one lived in the time of Nero, the other in the time of Adrian, and afterwards. Him he takes to be the person who had written against us.

"Concerning Celsus and his work, divers learned moderns may be consulted.

"It was a time of persecution when he wrote; for he several times speaks of the Christians teaching their principles privately, and holding assemblies contrary to law, and hiding themselves, because they were sought for to be put to death. This leads us to the reign of Marcus Antoninus the philosopher. It is also very probable that this Celsus is the same to whom Lucian inscribed his Alexander or Pseudomantis, which was not written until after the death of the forementioned emperor. He therefore reached to the time of Commodus. I choose, therefore, upon the whole, to place him with his friend Lucian, in the year of Christ 176, not far from the end of the reign of Marcus, who died in March, in the year 180.

"Against this adversary of our religion, Origen, at the desire of his friend Ambrose, wrote an answer. It was published, as some think, in the year 246, according to others in 249, an excellent work, greatly esteemed and celebrated, not only by Eusebius and Jerome, but also by many judicious moderns, particularly Du Pin; who says 'it is polite and methodical; not only the best work of Origen, but the most complete and best written apology for the Christian religion which the ancients have left us.'

"This apology of Origen consists of eight books, undoubtedly thus divided by the great master himself, that each book might be perused at a single reading, without disgust or weariness. But the Benedictines have now divided the books into sections, which is a very useful and acceptable service.

"As Celsus undertook a labored argument against the Christians, and he wrote so late as the time of Marcus Antoninus, when too the Christians were openly persecuted, and their affairs were rendered better known by the persecution itself, and by the apologies then made for them, we may reasonably expect to find in his work many things which may be now of great use to us; none, however, more valuable than the testimony here given to the books

of the New Testament. As Chrysostom says: 'Celsus and Bataneotes (meaning Porphyry) are sufficient witnesses to the antiquity of our books. For, I presume, they did not oppose writings which have been published since their own time.'"

Of the large extracts given by Lardner from the works of Celsus, quoted from Origen, we can only give a small portion. These we shall arrange in the best manner we can, under the following heads:

No. 1. *The Jewish expectation of a Messiah.*

"But my prophet said formerly at Jerusalem, that the Son of God will come a judge of good men, and a punisher of the wicked."

"There are innumerable," says the Jew in Celsus, "who confute Jesus, affirming that of themselves were said those things which were prophesied of concerning him:" that is, concerning the person who was to come.

But those were impostors, as Theudas and some others, who affirmed without proof: who neither said nor performed such things as Jesus had done; as Origen well shows.

"And, says he, how could we, who had told all men there would come one from God who should punish the wicked, treat him injuriously when he came?"

"But the Jew in Celsus says: For what reason could we reject him, whom we had before spoken of? Was it that we might be punished more severely than other men?"

"The Jew adds: The Prophets say that he who is to come is great, and a prince, and lord of all the earth, and of all nations, and of armies."

"The Jew in Celsus says: What God ever came to men who did not obtain acceptance, especially if he came to them who expected him? Or why should he not be acknowledged by them, who had long before expected him?"

"Afterwards the Jew, representing their sentiments, says: For we certainly expect a resurrection of the body, and eternal life: of which he who is to be sent to us is to be a pattern: and thereby to show that it is not impossible for God to raise up a man with a body." But Origen makes a doubt whether any Jews would say this of their expected Messiah.

"Afterwards Celsus in his own person says: That the contention between the Christians and the Jews is very silly; and that all our dispute with one another about Christ is no better than about the shadow of the ass, according to the proverb. And he thinks the whole question is of no importance; both sides believing that it had been foretold by the Spirit of God, that a Saviour of mankind is to come. But they do not agree whether he who has been prophesied of is come or not." (*B.* 2, *s.* 8, *p.* 61, 62; *s.* 29. *p.* 78; *s.* 75, *p.* 106; *s.* 77, *p.* 109.)

No. 2. *The books of the New Testament referred to by Celsus.*

"The Jew in Celsus goes on in this manner: I could say many things concerning the affairs of Jesus, and those too true, different from those written by the disciples of Jesus. But I purposely omit them." (*B.* 2, *s.* 13, *p.* 67.)

The phrase "disciples of Christ" in Celsus means those properly called his immediate followers. From this passage it is evident that the history of Jesus, as written by his disciples, before Celsus wrote against them, was well known and acknowledged. These books were then allowed to be written by his disciples; consequently, their genuineness is undisputed by Celsus.

"Afterwards he says that some of the believers, as if they were drunk, take a liberty to alter the gospel from the first writing, three or four ways, or oftener, that when they are pressed hard, and one reading has been confuted, they may disown that and flee to another." (*B.* 2, *Note* 27, *p.* 77.)

This is a clear admission of one ancient, original statement of the affairs of Jesus. But it is said that some believers (probably the followers of Marcion and Valentinus, eminent heretics) changed the gospel history. This, however, affects not the genuineness of the original from which they discovered those alterations.

"The Jew in Celsus," says Origen, "shuts up that argument in this manner. These things, then, we have alleged to you out of your own writings, not needing any other witnesses. Thus you are beaten with your own weapons." (*B.* 2, *s.* 74, *p.* 100.)

Celsus says the composers of the genealogies of Jesus "were very extravagant in making him descend from the

first man and the Jewish kings. And he thinks, he says, somewhat very extraordinary, when he observes that the carpenter's wife was ignorant of her high original." (*B.* 2, *n.* 32, *p.* 80.)

As none but Matthew and Luke have given us genealogies of Jesus Christ, this is an indisputable allusion to them, not only from this consideration, but from what Celsus says of these genealogies. But more especially he quotes Matthew in the following instances:

"They have likewise such precepts as these: Resist not him that injures you; and, if a man strike thee, as his phrase is, on the one cheek, offer to him the other also. That is an old saying; but here it is expressed in a more homely manner." (*B.* 7, *n.* 58, *p.* 370.)

"Celsus asks why we may not worship angels, and demons, and heroes. Why, the only reason, he says, is because 'it is impossible to serve two masters.'" (*B.* 7, *s.* 68, *p.* 376.)

This is quoted from Matthew or Luke.

There are quotations from the gospels in general, such as,—

"He finds fault with Jesus after this manner. He threatens, and feebly reproaches, when he says: 'Woe unto you;' and 'I foretell unto you.' For hereby he plainly confesseth his inability to persuade; which is so far below a God that it is even unworthy a wise man." (*B.* 2, *n.* 76, *p.* 107.)

"O light, O truth, says the Jew in Celsus; Jesus with his own mouth expressly declares these things, as you have recorded it, that there will come unto you other men, with like wonders, wicked men and impostors." (*B.* 2, *s.* 53, *p.* 92.)

"Moses encourageth the people to get riches, and destroy their enemies. But his Son [meaning 'the Son of God'], the Nazarean man, delivers quite contrary laws. Nor will he admit a rich man, or one that affects that dominion, to have access to his Father. Nor will he allow men to take more care for food or treasure than the ravens; nor to provide for clothing so much as the lilies; and to him that has smitten once, he directs to offer that he may smite again." (*B.* 7, *s.* 18, *p.* 343.)

"Of that saving of Jesus, that 'it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God,' he says it was plainly taken from Plato, who says: To be very good and very rich is impossible." (*B.* 6, *s.* 16, *p.* 286.)

"He says, It is a saying of ours, that God was sent to sinners. And he asks, But why was he not sent to those who were free from sin? What harm is it not to have sinned? God accepts an unrighteous man, if he humbleth himself for his wickedness: but a righteous man, who has practiced virtue from the beginning, if he looks to him he will not accept." (*B.* 3, *s.* 62, *p.* 148.)

"Celsus, says Origen, omitting those things that show the divinity of Jesus, reproacheth him with those things that are written of him in the gospels, his 'deriders, the purple robe, the crown of thorns, and the reed in his hand' (Matt. xxvii.; Mark xv.; Luke xxiii.; John xix.) Whence did you learn these things, Celsus, but from the gospels? says Origen, and tells him that, instead of ridiculing these things, he ought to admire the veracity of those who wrote them, and the greatness of him who voluntarily suffered such things for the good of men, and bore all with meekness and patience; for it is nowhere written that he bemoaned himself, or that he said or did anything mean and abject when he was condemned." (*B.* 2, *s.* 34, *p.* 81.)

"He pretends, says Origen, that Christians argue miserably when they say that the Son of God is the Word himself; and he thinks he makes good his charge, in that after we have affirmed the Son of God to be the Word, we do not show him to be a pure and holy Word, but a miserable man, condemned, scourged and crucified." (*B.* 2, *s.* 31, *p.* 79.)

This appears to be a quotation from John's testimony, or first Epistle. From the same writer he appears to quote when he ridicules "the blood which flowed from his body on the cross." (*B.* 2, *s.* 36, *p.* 81.)

Again he quotes from John:

"But you, what good or wonderful thing, either in word or deed, did you perform? You showed us nothing, though they called upon you in the temple to give some

manifest sign that you were the Son of God." (*B.* 1, *s.* 67, *p.* 52. See John x. 23.)

"After this he adds, says Origen: To the sepulcher of Jesus there came two angels, as is said by some, or, as by others, one only. He had observed, I think, that Matthew and Mark mention one only, Luke and John two. But, says Origen, those things are not contrary to each other; they are easily reconciled." (*B.* 5, *s.* 56, *p.* 268.)

"But Celsus, who has often derided a resurrection, which he did not understand, not contented with what he had already said, adds that we expect a resurrection of the flesh from wood: perverting, as I suppose, what is figuratively said: 'By wood [or by a tree] came death; and by a tree comes life. By Adam came death, but life by Christ' (I. Cor. xv. 22.) Then playing upon the word wood, he endeavors to expose it in two respects, and says that wood is honored by us, either because our master was fastened to a cross, or because he was a carpenter by trade." (*B.* 6, *s.* 36, *p.* 299.)

That he quotes from Paul is still more evident from the following references:

"Some of them say: 'Do not examine, but believe, and thy faith shall save thee; and the wisdom of this world is evil, and folly good.'"

Afterwards Origen quotes from Celsus the same saying in this manner: "Wisdom in life is evil, and folly good." In another place Celsus says that we say: "Wisdom in men is foolishness with God;" whereas, says Origen, Paul says: "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." (*B.* 8, *s.* 24, *p* 393.)

"If, says Celsus, these idols are nothing, what harm can there be to partake in their feasts? If they are demons, then no doubt they are of God; and they are to be believed and honored according to the laws, and to be prayed to, that they may be propitious to us." (*B.* 8, *s.* 24, *p.* 393.)

"Notwithstanding the many divisions and contentions which there are among them, says Celsus, you may hear them all saying: 'The world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.'" Which are the very words of Galatians vi. 14. (*B.* 6, *s.* 64, *p.* 275.)

Who that compares these quotations with I. Cor. iii. 19, I. Cor. viii. 4–10, Gal. vi. 14, can doubt that Celsus quotes from Paul's Epistles, as the writings of the disciples of Christ, known and acknowledged by the Christians in and before his days?

Allusions to Peter and John may be easily traced in the following:

"After these things, says Origen, he speaks to us in this manner: Surely you will not say, that when he could not persuade those that were here, he went to Hades, to persuade those who are there." (*B.* 2, *s.* 43, *p.* 85. See Peter iii. 19, 20.)

Celsus charges the Christians with having gross apprehensions of God: "He says we expect to see God with the eyes of the body, and to hear his voice with our ears, and to handle him with our sensible hands." (*B.* 7, *s.* 34, *p.* 374.) This appears to allude to I. John i. 1.

No. 3. *Christian facts admitted, or related, by Celsus.*

"It is but a few years since he [Jesus] delivered this doctrine, who is now reckoned by the Christians to be the Son of God." (*B.* 1, *s.* 26, *p.* 21.)

"Jesus was the first author of this sedition." (*B.* 8, *s.* 14, *p.* 387.)

Celsus frequently personates a Jew, whom he introduces arguing against Jesus. This Jew reprobates the Saviour "because he was born of a poor woman of that country, who subsisted by the labor of her hands. And he says she was put away by her husband, who was a carpenter by trade, he having found that she was guilty of adultery. Then he says, that having been turned out of doors by her husband, she wandered about in a shameful manner, till she brought forth Jesus in an obscure place, and that he, being in want, served in Egypt for a livelihood; and having there learned some charms, such as the Egyptians are fond of, he returned home; and then valuing himself upon those charms [powers], he set himself up for a God." (*B.* 1, *s.* 28, *p.* 22.)

Celsus on this relation asks: "Was the mother of Jesus handsome, that God should be in love with her beauty? It is unworthy of God to suppose him to be taken with a corruptible body, or to be in love with a woman, whether

she be of royal descent or otherwise." (*B.* 6, *s.* 73, *p.* 325.)

"It was given out by Jesus, that Chaldeans were moved at the time of his birth to come and worship him, as a God, when he was but a little child, and that this was told to Herod the tetrarch; who issued out an order to have all killed who had been born there about that time, intending to kill him with the rest, lest, if he should live to mature age, he should take the government." (*B.* 1, *s.* 58, *p.* 45.)

The Jew in Celsus thus addresses Jesus: "What occasion had you, when an infant, to be carried into Egypt, lest you should be killed? A god has no reason to be afraid of death. And now an angel comes from heaven to direct you and your relations to flee into Egypt, lest you should be taken up and put to death; as if the great God, who had already sent two angels upon your account, could not have preserved you, his own Son, in safety at home." (*B.* 1, *s.* 66, *p.* 51.)

And continues he: "But if he [Herod] was afraid that when you was come of age you should reign in his stead, why did you not reign when you was of age? But so far from that, the Son of God wanders about, cringing like a necessitous beggar." Or, as some may choose to have it rendered: "skulking from place to place, as if he was afraid of being taken up." * (*B.* 1, *s.* 61, *p.* 51).

"But that it may not be suspected," says Origen, "that we pass by any chapters because we have no answer at hand; I have thought it best, according to my ability, to confute every thing proposed by him; not so much observing the natural order of things, but the order which he has taken himself. Let us see, therefore, what he says, denying that the Holy Spirit was seen by our Saviour in the shape of a dove. It is the Jew who still goes on, addressing himself to him whom we own for our Lord. "You say that, when you was washed by John, their lighted upon you the appearance of a bird." The Jew adds:

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* *Ει δ οπως μη συ αυξηθεις αντ εκεινη βασιλευσης, τι, επειδη γε ηυξηθης, η βασιλευσεις, αλλ' ο τη θεη παις ητως αγενως αγειρεις, κυπταζων* [al, *χρυπαζων υπα φοβω, και περιφθειρυομενος ανω κατω*].

"What credible witness has said that he saw this? or who heard the voice from heaven, declaring you to be the Son of God, excepting yourself, and, if you are to be credited, one other of those, who have been punished like yourself?" (*B.* 1, *s.* 41, *p.* 31.)

Celsus says that Jesus, taking to himself ten or eleven abjects, vile publicans and sailors, went about with them, getting his subsistence in a base and shameful manner. (*B.* 1, *s.* 62, *p.* 47.)

In another place the Jew in Celsus says: "Jesus set out with ten profligate publicans and sailors." (*B.* 2, *s.* 68, *p.* 53.)

"He asks us," says Origen, "By what reasons are ye induced to think him the Son of God? And he makes us answer: Because we know his death was undergone for the destruction of the parent of evil. And soon after: Here he makes us answer him, that we therefore have thought him to be the Son of God, because he healed the lame and the blind, and, as you say, raised the dead." (*B.* 2, *s.* 47, *p.* 87.)

"Well, then, let us grant that all these things were done by you. After which he instanceth to the tricks of the Egyptians and other impostors: and then asketh this question: Because they do such things, must we therefore esteem them to be God's sons? or must we not rather say that these are artifices of wicked and miserable men?"*

It may not be uninteresting to hear, not only Celsus, but Origen's remarks on Celsus, concerning the predictions of Jesus with regard to himself:

"He then finds fault with his disciples, as if it were their fiction, that he foresaw and foretold the things which befell him. But that this is true, we can show, whether Celsus will or not; for we can allege many other things foretold by our Saviour, which happened to the Christians, his followers, in after times. Who can forbear to admire these words:

* Grotius handsomely replies to this insinuation of Celsus: "That Jesus was in Egypt is known only from the writings of his disciples, who also say that he returned thence when he was still an infant. And if in the time of Christ and his apostles there had been in Egypt, or anywhere else, any magical art by which the blind might be made to see, the dumb to speak, and all kinds of maladies might be healed on a sudden, as they were by Jesus Christ, the Emperors Tiberius and Nero, and others, who were very curious and inquisitive, would have spared no cost to obtain it." (Grotius De Veritate, b. 5, s. 3.)

'And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony to them and the Gentiles'? (Matt. x. 18.)———For if any men were to be brought before governors and kings for their doctrine, who should be more likely than the Epicureans, who deny a providence? ———And who, that shall in his mind place himself near Jesus, must not wonder when he hears him say: 'And this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, for a testimony to them, and to the Gentiles' (Matt. xxiv. 14). And yet it has been fulfilled; and the gospel of Jesus Christ has been preached to all men under the heaven, Greeks and barbarians, wise and unwise; for the word preached with power has subdued all mankind; nor is there any sort of men that has refused to accept of the doctrine of Jesus. And let the Jew in Celsus, who denies that Jesus foresaw what would happen to himself, consider how it should come to pass that when Jerusalem was standing, and the Jewish worship was performed in all its splendor, Jesus should foretell all that would happen to it from the Romans. Nor can they say that the disciples preached the doctrine of the gospel by word of mouth only, and did not deliver to their disciples any written memoirs concerning Jesus; but in them it is written: 'When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh' (Luke xxi. 20). There were then no armies near Jerusalem, to surround it and besiege it; the first began to be done under Nero, and continued to Vespasian, whose son Titus leveled Jerusalem with the ground."

"But Celsus says, the disciples of Jesus, the thing being too manifest to be denied by them, have bethought themselves to say, that he foreknew all these things.———But they are very weak in thinking to vindicate Jesus by writing these things of him. As if one should affirm a man to be righteous, and show him to be wicked; say he is a good man, and show that he has committed murder; say he is immortal, and show him dead [this last is the point which he is arguing, the other instances are only for illustration]: prefacing, however, continually, that he foreknew all these things. For neither do you say that he seemed to wicked men to suffer these things, when he did not suffer;

but you openly and expressly say that he did suffer." (*B.* 2, *s.* 3, *p*, 67.)

"What God, or demon, or wise man, who foresaw that such things were to happen to him, would not have avoided them, if he could, and not fall under the evils he foresaw?

"If he foresaw who should betray him, and who should deny him, how came it to pass that they did not fear him as a God? so that the one should not dare to betray him, nor the other to deny him? But they betrayed him, and denied him: so little did they regard him.

"It was God," says Celsus, "who foretold these things; therefore there was a necessity that they should come to pass. God therefore compelled his own disciples and prophets, with whom he ate and drank, to be wicked and abominable, for whose welfare above all others he ought to have been concerned. Never did man betray another with whom he sat at table. Here he who sits at table with God betrays him; and, which is still worse, God himself lays snares for those who sit at table with him, making them impious traitors."

To which Origen answers: "Celsus thinks that what has been foretold comes to pass because it has been foretold; to which we can by no means assent. For we do not say that he who foretold something future is the cause of its coming to pass; but whatever is future will come to pass, though it was not foretold; and therefore he who has the gift of foreknowledge foretells it.

"If he thought fit to undergo such things, and if in obedience to the Father he suffered death, it is apparent that they could not be painful to him, he being a God, and consenting to them. Why then does he lament and bewail, and pray that the fear of destruction may be removed, saying to this purpose: 'O Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away' (Matt. xxvii. 39).

"Why did he not now at last [when condemned], if not before, deliver himself from this ignominy, and do justice upon them who reviled both him and his Father?" (*B.* 2, *s.* 23, *p.* 75.)

"Celsus, as Origen says, selecting some passages out of the gospels, with a design to expose them, reproaches Jesus with 'the gall and the vinegar, as if he was mighty eager to

drink, and was not able patiently to endure thirst, which common people often bear contentedly.'" (*B.* 2, *s.* 75, *p.* 81.)

"They who conversed with him when alive, and heard his voice, and followed him as their master, when they saw him under punishment, and dying, were so far from dying with him, or for him, or being induced to despise sufferings, that they denied they were his disciples: but nowadays you die with him." (*B.* 2, *s.* 45, *p.* 86.)

"But let us consider whether any one that has really died ever rose again in the same body: unless you think that the stories of others are indeed, as well as seem to be, fables; whilst your fable is probable and credible, because of his voice on the cross, when he expired, and the earthquake, and the darkness; and because that when he was alive he could not defend himself, but after he was dead he arose, and showed the marks of his punishment, and how his hands had been pierced. But who saw all this? Why, a distracted woman, as you say, and one or two more of the same imposture, and some dreamers, who fancied they saw things as they desired to have them; the same that has happened to innumerable people." (*B.* 2, *s.* 55, *p.* 94.)

But Celsus says: "If he would make manifest his divine power, he should have shown himself to them that derided him, and to him that condemned him, and indeed to all; for surely he had no reason to fear any mortal now, after he had died, and, as you say, was a God." (*B.* 2, *s.* 67, *p.* 101.)

"When he was neglected in the body, he was continually preaching to all men: but when he should have given full assurance to all men, he shows himself privately to one woman, and his associates."—"Again he says: When he was punished, he was seen by all; but when risen, by one; the contrary to which ought rather to have been."—"If he would be hid, why was there a voice from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God? [Matt. xvii. 5.] And if he would not be hid, why did he suffer? why did he die?" (*B.* 2, *s.* 70, *p.* 104.)

No. 4. *Passages of Celsus concerning Christian principles.*

"Let us now see," says Origen, "how he affects to lessen us with regard to our moral doctrine, saying that it is only the same with that of the other philosophers, and contains in it nothing weighty and new." He also says "that

others, as well as Christians, had disallowed the divinity of the gods made with hands, forasmuch as oftentimes they were formed by wicked men." (*B.* 1, *s.* 4, 5, *p.* 6.)

"He says the same things are better taught by the Greeks, and without the threatenings of God, and his Son. And that Plato did not pretend to come from heaven, and declare such things." (*B.* 6, *s.* 1, *p.* 275.)

"Celsus thinks that we, by worshiping one that was apprehended and died, do much the same thing with the Getæ, who worship Zamolxis, and the Cilicians, who worship Mopsus." "Again he says of us, that we laugh at those who worship Jupiter, because his tomb is shown in Crete; nevertheless we worship one that was buried." (*B.* 3, *s.* 35, *p.* 131.)

He argues against a resurrection in this manner: "But that is another absurdity of theirs, that when God shall throw a fire on the world, and all other things shall be destroyed, they alone shall remain: and that not only the living, but they also who have been ever so long dead, shall come forth out of the earth in their own bodies [or in the same flesh], which is no other than the hope of worms. For what soul of a man would desire a putrefied body? Nor is this doctrine of yours agreed to by all Christians; for some among you reject it as impure, and abominable, and impossible. For how is it possible that a body which has entirely been corrupted should return to its own nature, and to its own primitive constitution, which it has once lost? When they are able to make no answer to this, they fly to that absurd refuge, that all things are possible with God. But neither can God do anything that is shameful; nor will he do that which is contrary to nature. Nor because you perversely desired anything, is God therefore able to do it, or is it to be supposed that he will do it. For God is not the author of extravagant desires, nor of any unbecoming disorders, but of what is right and fit. God may give everlasting life to the soul; but dead bodies, as Heraclitus says, are more contemptible than dung. To make flesh, full of filthiness not fit to be named, eternal, is a thing so unreasonable, that God neither can nor will do it; for he is himself the reason of all things in nature; and, therefore, can no more do

any thing contrary to reason, than contrary to himself." (*B.* 4, *s.* 14, *p.* 240.)

"It hence appears that Christians then expected a change or resurrection of the living and dead at the end of the world, or the dissolution of this state of things, according to what St. Paul writes (I. Cor. xv. 51–54, and I. Thess. iv. 13–17). When Celsus says that Christians were not all agreed about the doctrine of the resurrection, it may be doubtful whether he intends some of his own time, or whether he refers to I. Cor. xv. 12, and the following context: 'Now if Christ be preached, that he rose from the dead; how say some among you, that there is no resurrec- of the dead?'"

"But," says Celsus, "omitting many things that might be alleged against what they say of their master, let us allow him to be truly an angel. Is he the first and only one that has come? or have there been others before? If they should say, He only, they are easily convicted of falsehood. For they say that others have often come———And in particular, there came an angel to his sepulcher: some say one, others two, to tell the woman that he was risen: for the Son of God, it seems, could not open the sepulcher, but wanted another to remove the stone. And there came also an angel to the carpenter about Mary's pregnancy; and another angel to direct them to take the child, and flee. And what need is there to recken up particularly all that were sent to Moses, and others?" (*B.* 5, *s.* 52, *p.* 265, 266.)

"The design of this argument is to draw off the Christians from their peculiar veneration for Jesus. He reminds them therefore that there had been, even according to themselves, many other messengers from God, whom they might respect as well as him.

"From this passage we learn that the main point with Christians was a faith in Jesus, whom they esteemed their master: nor would they forsake him upon any account."

"The Jew in Celsus," says Origen, "blames the Christians for alleging the prophets, who had foretold the things concerning Jesus; whereas, he says, the prophecies may be applied to many others more probably than to Jesus." (*B.* 7, *s.* 1, 2.)

No. 5. *Passages concerning the progress of the Christian religion.*

"At first," says Celsus, "they were few in number, and then they agreed [or were of one mind]. But being increased, and spread abroad, they divide again and again, and every one will have a party of his own; which is what they were disposed to of old." (*B.* 3, *s.* 10.)

"I can not but think that Celsus has an eye to some things in the Acts of the Apostles, where the wonderful unanimity of the first Christians is recorded, as Acts ii. 44–47; iv. 32–37. In his time there were many sects and divisions among them, he says. He adds: 'Which they were disposed to of old,' or from the beginning. Here he may refer to the early divisions in the Church of Corinth (I. Cor. i. 11–17; iii. 3–6; xi. 17, 18), and, perhaps, to some of St. Paul's exhortations to concord and harmony. He may refer likewise to contentions about the method of receiving the Gentile converts, Acts xv. and other places. For it appears to me very probable that he has an eye to some things recorded in the New Testament.

"However, he owns that the Christians were now much increased; and, with regard to the divisions which were among them, it may be observed that they were foretold by Christ's apostles. But such things are not the fault of the gospel itself, but of men; nor is perfection to be attained or expected in this world. Origen says very well, there never was anything useful and considerable about which men have not differed. In medicine, in philosophy, among Jews, Greeks and barbarians, there are different sects and opinions."

"Celsus, says Origin, brings in his fictitious person of a Jew, bespeaking the Jewish believers in this manner: What ailed you, fellow-citizens, that you left the law of your country, and, seduced by him to whom we spoke just now, you have deserted us, to go to another name and another way of living?" Again: "When we had taken and punished him who led you about like brute beasts, you have notwithstanding forsaken the law of your country. How can you begin upon our sacred books, and afterwards disregard them, when you have no other foundation but our law?" (*B.* 2, *s.* 1, *p.* 57; *B.* 2, *s.* 4, *p.* 59.)

"The first head of accusation with Celsus against Christianity, says Origen at the beginning of his work, is that Christians secretly hold assemblies contrary to law." (*B.* 1, *s.* 1, *p.* 4.)

"Origen supposeth him to refer particularly to their agapæ, or love feasts. I should think he might intend all their assemblies in general for divine worship."

"Afterwards, says Origen, he speaks of the Christians performing and teaching those things which are agreeable to their sentiments privately; and that therein they did not act without reason, for avoiding the punishment of death hanging over them. And he compares their dangers to the dangers men have been liable to on account of philosophy; and he instanceth particularly in the case of Socrates; he might have added Pythagoras and other philosophers." (*B.* 1, *s.* 3, *p.* 5.)

"We saw before how Celsus ridiculed the Christians, saying, 'But now you die with him.' Afterwards, in another place, he thus insults them: 'Do you not see, good sir, how any man that will may not only blaspheme your demon, but drive him away from earth, and the sea (or from every quarter of the world under heaven); and binding you, his sacred image, hies you away and crucifies you? And your demon, or as you say, the Son of God, gives you no help.' And afterwards: 'If any one of you absconds, and hides himself, he is sought for to be punished with death.'" (*B.* 8, *s.* 39, *p.* 803; *B.* 8, *s.* 69, *p.* 424.)

"We go on. 'The Jews therefore,' says Celsus, 'being a distinct nation, and having the proper laws of their country, which they still carry about with them, together with a religion, such as it is, however those of their country act like other men; forasmuch as all follow the institutions of their own country, whatever they are. And that is reasonable enough, because different laws have been framed by different people; and it is fit that those things should be observed which have been established by public authority, nor would it be just to abrogate those laws which have been enacted from the beginning in every country. But if another appears, I should ask them whence they came, and what country-laws they have for their rule. They will answer, None at all. For they descend from the

same original; and they have received their master and leader from the same country; and yet they have revolted from the Jews.'" (*B.* 5, *s.* 25, *p.* 247.)

No. 6. *Passages of Celsus in which he chargeth the Christians with magical practices.*

"We saw before how Celsus says that Jesus had learned the Egyptian arts, and valuing himself upon them, had set himself up for a God. And in some other places he has been ready to have recourse to magic, in order to account for the works said to be done by our Saviour. Now I would observe what he says of Christians to the like purpose.

"After this, says Origen, I do not know for what reason, Celsus says that the Christians seem to be well skilled [or very mighty] in the names and invocations of certain demons." (*B.* 1, *s.* 6, *p.* 7.)

"Origen supposeth that Celsus there refers to those who exorcised or expelled demons; but says that in so doing Christians made use of no other name but that of Jesus, and the rehearsal of some parts of his history.

"Celsus says he had seen with some presbyters of our religion, books, in a barbarous language, containing the names of demons and other charms. And he says that those presbyters of our religion professed nothing good, but everything hurtful to mankind." (*B.* 6, *s.* 40, *p.* 302.)

"This, as well as somewhat else said before, Origen says, is downright fiction. And he says that all those stories are confuted by all who have conversed with Christians, who never heard of any such things practiced by them.

"However, this charge of magic against the Christians may be reckoned an argument that there were some uncommon things done by them at this time, and is often affirmed by Origen, as well as by other ecclesiastical writers; but not to the detriment of mankind, as Celsus insinuates, but for their benefit."

No. 7. *Passages in Celsus containing calumnies, or injurious reflections upon the Christians.*

"He objects after this manner: 'That I say nothing more severe than truth obliges me to say, is manifest hence; when others invite men to the mysteries, they in-

vite men after this manner: "Whoever has clean hands and a good understanding; or, Whosoever is pure from vice, whose soul is conscious of no evil, and lives according to the law of righteousness, let him come hither." Now let us see whom they invite. Whoever, they say, is a sinner, whoever is ignorant, whoever is silly, and, in a word, whoever is miserable, these the kingdom of God receives. Whom do you mean by "sinners"? Do you not thereby intend thieves, house-breakers, poisoners, sacreligious, and the like? And what else could men say who aim to form a society of the worst of men? To which Origen answers: It is one thing to invite the sick souls to come to be healed, and another thing to call such as are cured to partake of higher mysteries. We, who know the difference of these two things, first invite men to come and be healed, and we exhort sinners to attend to those who teach men not to sin; and the ignorant and unwise we exhort to hearken to those who will teach them wisdom; the weak we exhort to aim at manly wisdom, and the miserable we invite to accept of happiness, or, to speak more properly, blessedness. And when they whom we have admonished have made some progress, and have learned to live well, then they are initiated by us. "For we speak wisdom among the perfect" " (I. Cor. ii. 6). (*B.* 3, *s.* 59, *p.* 147.)

That the Christian doctrine gives no encouragement to wickedness, is apparent from the books of the New Testament, in which it is clearly taught; and that the general practice of Christians is here misrepresented, appears from Justin Martyr, who lived about the same time with Celsus, who, in his first apology, giving an account of the Christian principles and worship, says: 'Whenever any are persuaded of the truth of the things taught by us, and engage to the utmost of their power to live accordingly, they are directed to pray, joining therewith fasting, that they may obtain from God the forgiveness of their past sins, we also praying and fasting with them; then they are brought by us to a place where there is water, and they are regenerated in the same manner that we were.' Nor were they admitted to the eucharist till afterwards, as he afterwards

"So writes Justin. The discipline of the church was much the same in the time of Origen; for, some while before, in answer to another reflection of Celsus, not very different from this which we are now considering, he says: 'But what ground is there to compare us with those haranguers and common strollers? Is there any resemblance between them and us, who by readings, and by explications of those readings, excite men to piety toward the God of the universe, and to other virtues of like excellence, and who call men off from a neglect of religion, and from all things contrary to right reason? Certainly the philosophers would be well pleased to gather together such as are disposed to hear their discourses concerning what is good and honest. Nor ought such to be compared with the common strollers above mentioned; nor is it reasonable to suppose that Celsus would condemn those philosophers who, from a principle of humanity, endeavor to instruct and improve the ignorant vulgar.

"The Christians are more careful in distinguishing their hearers than any other men. When the philosophers speak in public, all attend that will; the Christians carefully examine the tempers and manners of those who come to them, nor are any received by us till they have given some evidences of a progress in virtue. If afterwards they fall into sin, especially any kind of intemperance, they are excluded from the community: if afterwards they repent, their recovery is considered as a rising again from the dead. But now they are received again not without more difficulty than at first: nor can they ever be admitted into any office or dignity in the Church of God.')

"Moreover, as Dr. Wall observes in his Notes upon John viii. at the beginning: 'It is no discredit, but an excellence in any religion, that it has rules of pardon for great sins, provided it lay conditions, and strong injunctions of amending, and doing so no more, such as here at ver. 11.' For certain, the gospel promiseth not any special advantages to men who live in sin; such as sin, it calls to repentance; nor is there any pardon nor salvation for sinners, unless they repent, and practice real holiness and virtue.

"That charge of Celsus against Christianity, therefore, is altogether absurd and groundless; though it was after-

wards renewed by the Emperor Julian; and I hope it will be excused, that I have so particularly considered this objection the first time it came in our way."

"Celsus quotes, or seems to quote, words of a Dialogue, (if they are not his own invention), as written by some Christian, where mention is made of angels of light, and other angels, with their prince at their head, who is mentioned by a very opprobious name. Then, says Origen, laying hold of those words, he deservedly censures those who say such things. We also are very ready to join in censuring such as call the God of the Jews accursed, if indeed there are any such men; I mean the God that sends rain and thunder, the God of Moses, and author of the creation described by him. Here, adds Origen, Celsus seems to have intended somewhat very unfair against us, proceeding from ill-will, unbecoming a philosopher. He intended that they who read his book, to whom we are unknown, should declare war against us, as men who called the good Creator of the world accursed; in which he resembleth the Jews, who, at the first rise of the Christian doctrine, spread abroad calumnies against it; giving out that they killed a child and ate it, and that when the lights were put out they practiced promiscuous lewdness. Which calumny, however absurd, was of old credited by many who differ from us; and even now there are some who are deceived by it, that for this reason they are so averse to all Christians that they will have no discourse or communication with any of them. Somewhat of this kind Celsus seems to have aimed at, when he gave out that the Christians call the Creator of the world the accursed God; that men believing such things of us might be disposed to do their utmost to extirpate the Christians, as the most impious of all men." (*B.* 6, *s.* 27, 28, *p.* 293, 294.)

"By all which we may perceive that Celsus was filled with enmity against the Christians of his time, and did not spare them."

There is yet one place more, which I must take notice of before I leave this article.

"After this he insinuates that the worship paid to Antinous, one of the beloved favorites of Adrian, at Antinopolis in Egypt, differs not from the respect which we have

for Jesus. Another instance this of his hatred of us! But what have we in common with men whose manners are so vicious as not to be exempt from that effeminacy which is contrary to nature? What comparison can be made between them and the venerable Jesus, whom we follow, against whom, though innumerable lies and calumnies have been forged, none have dared to charge him with any kind of intemperance whatever?" (*B.* 3, *s.* 36, *p.* 132.)

Remarks on the writings of Celsus:

1. To a person of ordinary candor, I think it will require no argument, other than the native meaning of the foregoing extracts, to demonstrate that the whole Christian history and doctrine were read before the days of Celsus, as they are now read in those writings which we call the New Testament.

2. From the quotations made, we feel that we hazard nothing, even before the skeptical censors, in asserting that one might sketch all the gospel facts, and make out such a history of Jesus Christ as the New Testament offers, from the writings of Celsus, independent of any other documents now existing either in Jewish or pagan antiquity.

3. In examining a writer so evidently hostile to the Christians as was this Epicurean philosopher, two things must always be kept in mind: first, that he necessarily either wholly pretermits, or slurs every distinguishing excellence of the cause and people; and in the next place, he takes all advantage of every seeming ambiguity, and converts into blemishes the most unequivocal virtues, in order to sustain his party. Therefore, he that would impartially decide on such a witness must discriminate between his text and comments, and make such a reasonable rebate on the whole representation as the passion and feeling and enmity of the writer would seem to require.

4. It ought to be noted, with all emphasis, that this first and chief of the writers against the Christian gospel assails not the cause by denying the miraculous attestations by which its original promulgation was accompanied, but explains them as a sort of magical power.

5. That, as Dr. Sherlock well observes, although Celsus lived so near the age of the Apostles, he could find no books of any credit in the world that questioned the gos-

pel facts, but was obliged to search the Christian books for evidence against the Christian gospel. It is evident that no such documents existed in the first or second century of the Christian religion down to the year 176. It is well known to all those conversant with Roman history, that all religions were tolerated; that no religious books were ever suppressed but the Christian; and therefore, had any such books ever existed before the days of Celsus, he must have known and had access to them. His making no allusion or reference to any such, is sufficient proof that he could not strengthen his cause by any such documents.

But I will sum up the whole in the words of Doddridge, having quoted so liberally from Lardner in the previous extracts:

"Of the proof of the genuineness of the New Testament, that may be derived from the fragments of Celsus, as preserved by Origen.

"The book of Celsus is unhappily lost; but there are large extracts made in Origen, and, as it seems, with such exactness, that it is difficult to find more considerable remains of any ancient book not now extant. The following collection is confined to the illustration of this thought: 'What we may learn from him concerning the real existence of the New Testament, in his age, and the regard in which it was held among Christians.'

"Celsus is, no doubt, an evidence of great value, as he wrote so early. Origen observes, p. 3, that he had been dead long before his undertaking to answer his book against Christianity, which he calls "The True Word." And it appears, from another passage of Origen, that he lived in the days of Adrian and his successor, p. 8. So that his book must have been written in the second century; which is farther confirmed by Lucian's dedicating to him one of his works entitled Pseudomantis. It may be also observed that he speaks of Christ as having taught and suffered very lately, p. 21, and p. 282.

"As for the references to the gospels, we do not find that he quotes any of them by the name of the authors: but he speaks of the gospel, meaning, no doubt, the history of Christ, as being changed three or four times, p. 77. He seems to speak of several of the evangelists, as agreeing to

write Christ's predictions, p. 89, and of things written by the disciples of Christ, p. 67. All which seem to make it evident that he had more than the book of St. Matthew in his hand: and though the greatest part of his references may be found there, yet there are also many of them in the other gospels.

"He quotes from the gospels such a variety of particulars, that the enumeration of them will almost prove an abridgment of the evangelists' history: particularly, that Jesus, who, he says, was represented as the Word of God, p. 79, and who was the author of the Christian name, p. 21, and also called himself the Son of God, ib., was a man of Nazareth, p. 343. That he was the reputed son of a carpenter, p. 30. That his mother's pregnancy was at first suspected, ib., but that it was pretended that his body was formed in her womb by the Spirit of God; or, as he elsewhere expresses it, produced by a divine operation, p. 30. And that to remove the carpenter's prejudice, an angel appeared to him to inform him of this, p. 266. That, when he was born, a star appeared in the east to certain Magi, who came to adore him, p. 31, 45. The consequence of which was the slaughter of the infants by the order of Herod, hoping thereby to destroy Jesus, and prevent his reign, p. 45. But that his parents were warned by an angel to fly into Egypt, to preserve his life, as if his Father could not have protected him at home, p. 51, and 266; and that he continued in Egypt for a while, where, he says, he had an opportunity of learning magic, p. 22.

"He farther represents it as pretended in those books that when Jesus was washed by John, the appearance of a dove descended upon him, and that a voice was heard from heaven, declaring him to be the Son of God, p. 31 and 106. That he was vexed by a temptation, and the assaults of an evil spirit, p. 303. He calls Christ himself a carpenter, p. 300, and insults his mean life, lurking from place to place, p. 47, gathering up ten or twelve poor men, publicans, and men that used the sea, of scandalous characters, and represents Christ as a beggar, p. 47; that he was sometimes hungry and thirsty, p. 55; speaks of his being rejected by many that heard him, and hints, though not very expressly, at an attempt to throw him down a precipice, p. 298.

"He grants that he wrought miracles, and particularly that he cured some sick people, raised some that were dead, and multiplied some loaves; but speaks of others doing the like, p. 53. He also expressly mentions his curing the lame and the blind; and his raising the dead is mentioned a second time, p. 87. He lampoons the expression, 'Thy faith has saved thee,' p. 8.

"He hints at several things concerning the doctrine of Christ, and the manner of his preaching, taken especially from St. Matthew's account of his sermon on the mount, particularly that he promised that his followers should inherit the earth; that if any strike them on the one cheek, they should turn the other, p. 343 and 370; that he declared, no man can serve two masters, p. 380; and would have his disciples learn from the birds of the air, and the lilies of the field, not to be excessively careful about food and raiment, p. 343. He also refers to some other discourses of Christ, as his saying it was easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to be saved, p 286 and 288.

"He observes that Jesus, however, was not generally attended to, and that he denounced woes upon his hearers for their obstinate infidelity, p. 107.

"He also says that his disciples in their writings pretend that he foretold all things that he was to suffer, p. 67; and his resurrection, p. 93; and likewise that deceivers would come, and work miracles, and speaks of the author of these wicked works by the name of Satan, p. 89.

"He objects that Jesus withdrew himself from those who sought to put him to death, p. 62, and yet afterwards did not avoid death, knowing it was to come, p. 70. He speaks of his eating the flesh of a lamb, p. 340; and that he foretold to his disciples, they would give him up to his enemies, thereby making them wicked, though they were the companions of his table, p. 72.

"That before his sufferings he prayed in these words: 'Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass away,' p. 75. That he was betrayed by his disciples, though robbers are faithful to their leaders, p. 62 and 66. That none of his disciples dared to suffer for him, p. 86, and that he professed to undergo his sufferings in obedience to his Father, p. 75, and said that 'these things ought to happen,' p. 332.

"That he was denied by one who knew him to be God, p. 71, to whom, as well as to the traitor, he had foretold what he would do, p. 72.

"It is intimated that he spoke of coming again with a heavenly host, p. 337.

"He speaks of Jesus as ignominiously bound, p. 282; as scourged, p. 76; as crowned with thorns, with a reed in his hand, and arrayed in a scarlet robe, and as condemned, p. 81; as having gall given him to drink when he was led away to punishment, p. 174; as shamefully treated in the sight of the whole world, p. 282; as distended on the cross, p. 82. He derides him for not exerting his divinity to punish those outrages, p. 81; as taking no vengeance on his enemies, p. 404; as incapable to deliver himself, and not delivered by his Father in this extremity, p. 41; and as greedily drinking gall and vinegar, through impatience of thirst, p. 82 and 340.

"He observes it was pretended that when Jesus expired upon the cross there was darkness and an earthquake, p. 94; that when he arose he needed an angel to remove the stone of the sepulcher, though he was said to be the Son of God, p. 266. And according to some, one, according to others, two angels came to the sepulcher to inform the women of his resurrection, p. 266. That after his resurrection he did not appear to his enemies, p. 98; but first to a woman whom he had dispossessed, p. 94 and 104; that he appeared to a few of his disciples, showing them the marks of crucifixion, and appeared and disappeared on a sudden, p. 94, &c., and 104. And he says: We take these things from your own writings, to wound you with your own weapons, p. 106.

"Beside all these circumstances produced from the gospels, he speaks of Christ's pretending that he should come again to burn the wicked, and to receive the rest to eternal life with himself, p. 175. He refers to the Christian doctrine of the fall of the angels, and their being reserved in bonds under the earth, p. 266.

"It is observable that nothing is quoted by him from the Acts in his whole book; nor does he name St. Paul; but he quotes his epistles, particularly these words from the epistle to the Galatians, iv. 14: 'The world is crucified unto

me, and I unto the world,' p. 273, which Origen says is all that he had taken from St. Paul. However, he has also these words of I. Cor. iii. 29: 'The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God,' p. 283, and 'an idol is nothing' (I. Cor. viii. 4), p. 293. But it is observable, in the first of these quotations, Celsus reproacheth the Christians with their many divisions; and yet says that, however they differed, they agreed in using that expression. He seems also, p. 242, expressly to refer to I. Cor. xv. 51, 52, and I. Thess. iv. 15–17, when he says that the Christians expected that they only should escape in the burning of the world, and that not only they who are alive when it happens, but those also who have been a long time dead.

"Upon the whole, there are in Celsus about eighty quotations from the books of the New Testament, or references to them, of which Origen has taken notice. And whilst he argues from them, sometimes in a very perverse and malicious manner, he still takes it for granted, as the foundation of his argument, that whatever absurdities could be fastened upon any words or actions of Christ recorded in the evangelists, it would be a valid objection against Christianity; thereby in effect assuring us, not only that such a book did really exist, but that it was universally received by Christians in those times as credible and divine. Who can forbear adoring the depth of Divine wisdom, in laying such a firm foundation for our faith in the gospel history, in the writings of one who was so inveterate an enemy to it, and so indefatigable in his attempts to overthrow it?

"To conclude: Celsus does not appear to have founded any single objection against Christianity upon any of the spurious gospels, Acts, or Revelations; which, considering his malice on the one hand, and the many foolish and exceptionable things to be found in them on the other, seems to be a good argument that he never saw them. Else he had hardly candor enough to forbear pleading such arguments as they might have afforded him; even though he had known that the Christians did not esteem them of equal authority with those which he has so furiously, but at the same time so impotently, assaulted."

PORPHYRY.

Porphyry was born at Tyre in Phœnicia, as we are assured by himself, and by Libanius and Eunapius, who also say that he was descended from honorable ancestors. It is computed that he was born in the twelfth year of Alexander Severus, of Christ 233.

His original name was Meleck, which in the Syriac language means king. Longinus, under whom he studied some time, changed his name into Porphyry, signifying in Greek, purple, which was usually worn by kings and princes.

He was in Rome in the year 253, but made no long stay there. He came thither again in the tenth year of the Emperor Gallienus, when he was thirty years of age, as he says himself. As the tenth year of that emperor answers to the year of our Lord 262 or 263, it is concluded that Porphyry was born in the year of Christ 233. At that time Plotinus had a school at Rome; and Porphyry, being much taken with him, spent there six years under his instructions; at the end of which term, as he says himself, he had a strong propensity to put an end to his own life. Plotinus perceiving it, told him that thought did not proceed from reason, but from a melancholic disorder, and advised him to leave the city. Whereupon in the year 268 he went into Sicily, where he was in the second year of the Emperor Claudius, in the year 270, when Plotinus died in Campania.

How long he stayed in Sicily is not certain; but Eunapius says he afterwards returned to Rome, where he acquired great fame for his learning and eloquence. Eunapius says likewise, that he lived to a great age. And Porphyry himself, in his Life of Plotinus, mentions something which happened to him in the sixty-eighth year of his age; at which time, probably, he was about seventy years old. There can therefore be no doubt that he reached to the latter part of the reign of Diocletian, and died, as may be supposed, in the year of Christ 302 or 303. Eunapius supposeth that he ended his days at Rome. Suidas says truly, but without much accuracy, that he lived in the time of Aurelian, and reached to the Emperor Diocletian. Nor

is Eunapius much more exact, who, speaking of Porphyry, and some others, says they flourished in the time of Gallienus, Claudius, Tacitus, Aurelian, and Probus.

Porphyry is called Bataneotes by Jerome and Chrysostom. Baronius hence argued that Porphyry was a Jew, and was so called from Batania, a city in Palestine; which opinion is rejected by his learned annotator. Porphyry certainly was a Syrian, as was shown above from unquestionable authority.

Porphyry's works were very numerous; there is a large catalogue of them in Suidas, though not complete; his defects are supplied by Fabricus, and Lucas Holstenius. I shall mention but a few of them:

Besides that inscribed to Marcella, already mentioned, and his Life of Plotinus, he wrote of Abstinence from Animals, in four books, still extant.

A Philosophical History, or History of Philosophers, also in four books, quoted several times by Cyril of Alexandria in his work against Julian; mentioned also by Socrates in his Ecclesiastical History. From Eunapius we know, that it concluded with the Life of Plato.

And, probably, in the first book of that work was the Life of Pythagoras, which we now have, but not complete.

Against the Christians, in fifteen books; but there is nothing of this work remaining excepting some fragments, which it is incumbent on me to collect out of several authors in which they are to be found. He was answered by Methodius, Eusebius of Cesarea, and Apollinarius of Laodicea in Syria. All which confutations of this adversary of the Christians are entirely lost.

It is generally supposed that Porphyry's work against the Christians was written in Sicily, as is intimated by Eusebius and Jerome. And by Cave, Porphyry is placed as flourishing in the year 270, where I also place him; and I do so partly out of regard to Suidas, who, as before seen, commenced before the end of the year 270. Porphyry was then almost forty years of age; at that time he was in Sicily; but I do not recollect anything that should determine the exact time when he published his work against the Christians; for he might reside in Sicily some while; nor is there any remaining evidence that immediately after

coming into that island he set about this work. But we know that it was answered by Methodius, who is supposed to have suffered martyrdom in the year of Christ 311 or 312, near the end of Dioclesian's persecution, if not sooner. Eusebius flourished from the year 315, and after; but when his confutation of Porphyry was published, can not be said exactly; I think it was one of his first works, and might be published before he was a bishop. Porphyry's long stay in Sicily was so well known, or so much talked of, that Augustine seems to have thought it to be his native country.

Eusebius quotes, from the third book of Porphyry against the Christians, some remarks against the Jewish scriptures. His words are:

"Some," says he, "determined not to see the depravity of the Jewish scriptures, but to find out a solution of objections that may be brought against them, have adopted forced interpretations, inconsistent in themselves, and unsuitable to those writings, and such as should not only be a vindication of those absurdities, but afford likewise a recommendation of their own particular opinions. For having given out that the things delivered plainly are types and allegories, and pretending that those writings are inspired, and to be looked upon as oracles full of hidden mysteries; and having by these means captivated the judgments of men, they with a critical pride and vanity set forth their expositions." (*B.* 6, *p.* 219, 220.)

Jerome also quotes him specially and repeatedly on the prophecy of Daniel, as follows:

"The twelfth book of Porphyry," says Jerome, "was written against the book of the prophet Daniel: in which he says that it was not written by him whose name it bears, but by another, who lived in Judea in the time of Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes: and that the book of Daniel does not foretell things to come, but relates what had already happened. In a word, whatever it contains to the time of Antiochus is true history: if there is anything relating to aftertimes, it is all falsehood; forasmuch as the writer could not see things future, but at the most only make some conjectures about them." (*Vol.* 3, *p.* 1071.)

Porphyry labors to make the prophecy of Daniel all history. Dr. Prideaux judiciously says of his labors:

"The prophecies of Daniel concerning the Persian kings, and the Macedonians, that reigned as well in Egypt as Asia, having been all, according to the best historians, exactly fulfilled, Porphyry could not disprove them by denying their completion: and therefore for overthrowing their authority he took quite the contrary course, and labored to prove their truth; and from hence alleged, that being so exactly true in all particulars, they could not therefore be written by Daniel so many years before the facts were done, but by some one else under his name, who lived after the time of Antiochus Epiphanes; for which purpose he made use of the best Greek historians then extant. Such were Callinicus Sutorina, Diodorus Siculus, ———and from them made evident proof that all that is written in the eleventh chapter of Daniel was truly, in every particular, acted and done in the order as there related. And from this exactness of completion endeavored to infer the assertion mentioned: that these prophecies were written after the facts were done; and therefore are rather historical narratives, relating things past, than prophetical predictions, foreshowing things afterwards to come." (*Antiq.*, *b.* 12, *c.* 10.)

A few examples of this must suffice:

Dan. ii. 40: "And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron; forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces, and subdueth all things." "Which," as Jerome observes, "plainly denotes the Romans." And afterwards: "But in the end of all these kingdoms, of gold, silver, brass, and iron, 'was cut out [see ver. 34 and 45] a stone,' 'which denotes our Lord and Saviour,' 'cut out without hands,' 'that is, born of a virgin without the concurrence of man.' 'Which, breaking in pieces all the other kingdoms, became a great mountain, and filled all the earth:' which the Jews and the impious Porphyry refer to the people of Israel, who in the end of the world, as they will have it, shall be very powerful, and break in pieces all other kingdoms, and reign forever." (*Vol.* 3, *p.* 1081.)

Ch. vii., ver. 7: "After this I saw in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast———and it had ten horns."

"Porphyry," says Jerome, "puts the two last beasts, that of the Macedonians and Romans, in the one kingdom of the Macedonians; and then divides it in this manner. By the leopard he understands Alexander himself, and the beast 'diverse from the others' he supposeth to mean the four successors of Alexander; and then he computes ten kings, till the time of Antiochus, surnamed Epiphanes, who were exceeding cruel: and these kings he reckons not of one and the same kingdom, for instance, Macedonia, Syria, Asia, or Egypt; but out of divers kingdoms he forms one succession of kings; this he does, that those words, 'a mouth speaking great things,' may be understood to relate, not to Antichrist, but to Antiochus." (*Vol.* 2, *p.* 1100.)

Ver. 9: "I considered the horns, and behold there came up among them another little horn——And behold in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things."

"In vain does Porphyry imagine that the little horn which came up after the ten horns denotes Antiochus Epiphanes. Therefore let us say, as all the writers of the church have delivered it to us, that in the end of the world, when the Roman Empire is to be destroyed, there shall be ten kings, who will divide the Roman government among themselves." (*Vol.* 3, *p.* 1101.)

The beginning of the twelfth chapter of the book of Daniel is in these terms: "And at that time shall Michael stand up the great prince that standeth for the children of thy people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was, since there was a nation, even to that same time. And at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame, and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the stars forever and ever."

"Hitherto," says Jerome, "Porphyry has written with some sort of reserve and modesty, and has imposed upon unskillful people among us, and the ill instructed on his own side; but what can he say upon this paragraph, in which the resurrection of the dead is spoken of?——There

is nothing which the perverseness of men may not do. His explication is this: And this also is written of Antiochus, who, when he went into Persia, left an army with Lysias, who was governor of Antioch and Phœnicia, that he might fight with the Jews, and destroy their city Jerusalem; all which things are related by Josephus, the Jewish historian, showing that there was then such distress as never had been before.—But the Jews overcoming, and the generals of Antiochus being slain, and himself having died in Persia, the people of Israel were delivered, even 'all they who were written in the book of God,' that is, who had valiantly stood up for the law. On the contrary, they were 'blotted out of the book' who had apostatized from the law, and joined the interest of Antiochus. Then, says he, they who, as it were, 'slept in the dust of the earth,' and were covered over with the weight of affliction, and were, as it were, buried in sepulchers, rose out of the 'dust of the earth' to unexpected victory. The keepers of the law lifted up their heads out of the ground, rising to eternal life; and the apostates from it to 'everlasting contempt.' The masters and teachers who understood the law 'will shine as the firmament,' and they who had exhorted the lower order of people to keep God's ordinances 'will shine as the stars for ever and ever.' He also allegeth the history of the Maccabees, in which it is said that many of the Jews fled into the deserts, and hid themselves in the caves and holes of the rocks, and after the victory came out. This, he says, is expressed metaphorically, as if it were a resurrection from the dead." I. Macc. ii. 28, 29; II. Macc. viii. 1. (*Vol.* 3, *p.* 1135.)

Ver. 7: "And I heard the man clothed in linen, which was upon the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand, and his left hand to heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, that it shall be for time, times, and a half."

Upon which Jerome observes: "This 'time, and times, and half a time,' Porphyry interprets as meaning three years and a half; nor do we deny this to be agreeable to the style of Scripture. And Porphyry, referring this to Antiochus, says that by his means the temple was deserted for three years and a half; but, says Jerome, Josephus and the

book of Maccabees mention no more than three years, during which space the temple was defiled, and the image of Jupiter stood there by the order of Antiochus Epiphanes. Therefore, as Jerome adds, the space of three years and a half relates not to Antiochus, but to Antichrist." (*Vol.* 3, *p.* 1136.)

Ver. 11: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days."

"These thousand two hundred and ninety days, Porphyry says, were fulfilled in the time of Antiochus, and in the desolation of the temple; whereas Josephus and the book of Maccabees, as before said, mention three years only. Whence it is manifest that the three years and a half are to be understood of the times of Antichrist, who will persecute the saints for three years and a half, one thousand two hundred and sixty days." (*Vol.* 3, *p.* 1133.)

Ver. 12: "Blessed is he that waiteth, and cometh to the thousand three hundred and five and thirty days."

"Porphyry says that the five and forty days over and above the one thousand two hundred and ninety, show the time of the victory gained over the generals of Antiochus; when Judas and Maccabee fought valiantly, and cleansed the temple, broke the idol in pieces, and offered sacrifices in the temple; which might be rightly said, if the book of Maccabees had related that the temple was polluted three years and a half, and not three years." (*Vol.* 3, *p.* 1134.)

So writes Jerome. But this additional number of "five and forty days" may be understood to reach to the time of the death of Antiochus, when the deliverance of the Jewish people would be completed and their tranquility further secured.

Prideaux has shown largely, as well from the books of the Maccabees as from Josephus, that the desolation of the temple happened just three years and six months before it was again restored by Judas Maccabæus. "And therefore, that restoration having been made on the twenty-fifth day of the ninth month of the Jews, called Cislieu, in the 148th year of the era of the Seleucidæ, it follows that the

time of this desolation must have been in or about the twenty fifth day of their third month, called Sivan, in the era of the Selucidæ 145, which answers to the year before Christ 168; then it was that, by the command of Antiochus and the wicked agency of Apollonius, the daily sacrifices whereby God was honored every morning and evening at Jerusalem were made to cease, and the temple turned into desolation"

By the queen mentioned Dan. v. 10, Porphyry, as we learn from Jerome, understood the wife of Belshazzar; which must be a mistake, as is now allowed by all learned men in general, and was shown by Jerome himself. Says Prideaux: "The queen that entered the banqueting house to direct the king to call for Daniel, could not be his wife; for all his wives and concubines, the text tells us, sat with him at the feast (ver. 2.) And therefore it must have been Nitocris, the queen-mother, a lady famous for her wisdom, who had the chief management of public affairs, and is called the queen by way of eminence." Nitocris, as it seems, was a lady of too much gravity, and too much engaged about public affairs, to take part in that entertainment.

"This, then, is an error at best; but I do not think it to be an innocent error; I rather think it to have been a designed and willful misrepresentation. 'When the queen came into the banqueting house, she said to Belshazzar: O king, live forever. Let not thy thoughts trouble thee. There is a man in thy kingdom in whom is the spirit of the holy gods; and in the days of thy father [or grandfather] light, and understanding, and wisdom, like the wisdom of the gods, was found in him'—and what follows, ver. 10–12. This did not please Porphyry; it afforded an argument for the real age, and peculiar wisdom, and prophetic character of Daniel. The real truth, therefore, did not suit Porphyry. This, therefore, I consider as an unfair argument, and another instance of want of candor. We may be the more confirmed in this supposition, in that, as Jerome says, 'Porphyry ridiculed the queen for pretending to know more than her husband.' There is no foundation for ridicule in the history itself."

On all this I only observe—

1. That it is undeniable that Porphyry read the book of Daniel as we now read it.

2. That in applying it to events that had transpired, he acknowledges its intelligibility and its truth.

In the first book of his Evangelical Preparation, Eusebius exposing the absurdity of the heathen polytheism, which had long prevailed in the world; which, as he says, having been first introduced among the Phœnicians and Egyptians, had been propagated among the Greeks and other nations. This, he says, he will show, beginning with the Phœnicians. (*Pr. Ev., b. i., c.* 9, *p.* 30, 31.)

"Their affairs are written by Sanchoniathon, an ancient author, older, as is said, than the Trojan times; who, they say, has written the Phœnician history, with great exactness and fidelity. Philo, not the Jew, but Biblius, has translated the whole work into Greek out of the Phœnician language. He is quoted by that person who in our time wrote against us, in the fourth book of his work, in these very words: 'Sanchoniathon, of Berytus, writes the history of the Jews very exactly, and mentions times and places; taking his accounts from the Memoirs of Jerombaal, priest of the god Jevo; who dedicated his history to Abibal, king of Berytus, by whom, as well as by others, his contemporaries, capable judges of the truth, it was approved. Their age was before the Trojan times, and approaches near to the times of Moses, as is evident from the succession of the kings of Phœnicia. Sanchoniathon, who with great fidelity wrote their ancient history in the Phœnician language, collecting it partly from the registers of cities and partly from the records kept in temples, lived in the time of Semiramis, queen of the Assyrians, who is computed to have reigned before the times of Troy, or about them. The work of Sanchoniathon was translated into Greek by Philo Biblius.' So writes that person, bearing testimony to the veracity and antiquity of that historian." (*Pr. Ev., b. i., p.* 30, 31.)

"But," as Eusebius adds, "that ancient writer, in the progress of his work, does not recommend the worship of God who is over all, nor of the heavenly bodies, but of mortal men and women; who, so far from being respecta-

ble for the probity of their manners, or the excellence of their virtues, or their great wisdom, which might recommend them to esteem and imitation, that their characters are blemished with the most foul and flagitious vices; and they appear to be the very same that are now worshiped as gods in all cities and countries." (*Ibid.*, *p.* 31.)

The same passage of Porphyry is quoted again by Eusebius, in the ninth chapter of the tenth book of the same work, the Evangelical Preparation. He there introduceth it and argueth from it after this manner.

His subject in that place is the antiquity of Moses and the Jewish prophets. He first refers to his Chronicle Canons, where he had already showed the same thing. "Now," says he, "to what was then said I would add here the testimony of the most bitter enemy of the Jews and us that ever was; I mean that philosopher of our time who, in the abundance of his enmity against us, published a work in which he reviles not us only, but also the Jews, and Moses, and the prophets after him, and all in the like manner; for the confession of enemies is always reckoned credible. Porphyry then, in the fourth book of his work against us, says in these very words: 'Sanchoniathon, of Berytus, writes the history of the Jews very exactly'"—so quoting the passage before transcribed by me at length. After which Eusebius proceeds: "Upon which we may argue in this manner: If Sanchoniathon flourished in the time of Semiramis, and she lived long before the times of Troy, it follows that Sanchoniathon was older than the same times. But he is said to have taken his memoirs from others, who lived before his times, and who were not contemporaries with Moses, but only lived near his times. It follows that Sanchoniathon is still so much later than Moses, as he is later than those of greater antiquity, who only lived near the time of Moses." (*Pr. Ev.*, *b. x.*, *p.* 484, 485.)

This passage of Porphyry is also cited by Theodoret in his books against the Gentiles, and is from his work written against us. He likewise quotes it in proof of the antiquity of Moses, and that he lived before the t mes of Troy.

And Eusebius, in his introduction to the second book of his Chronicle Canon, as we now have it in Jerome's Latin

translation, says: "The antiquity of Moses is asserted by many of our own writers, and among the Jews by Josephus and Justus; and among the Greeks (or Gentiles), the impious Porphyry, in the fourth book of his work, which with fruitless labor he composed against us, affirms that Moses was older than Semiramis." (*Chr. Can.*, *b.* 6, *p.* 498.)

I now proceed to passages of Porphyry concerning the books of the New Testament.

Mill, in his Prolegomena to the New Testament, has taken notice of several texts in the gospels, to which Porphyry made exceptions.

Matt. i. 11, 12: "And Josias begat Jechonias and his brethren about the time they were carried away to Babylon. And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel."

"Here, as it seems, one and the same person, Jechonias, ends the second fourteen, and begins the third class of fourteen; consequently one generation was supposed to be wanting. Porphyry, therefore, as we learn from Jerome, charged St. Matthew with a mistake. But Jerome says that Porphyry herein only betrayed his own ignorance and unskillfulness.

"We can hence clearly argue, that in Porphyry's time the genealogy of St Matthew was generally received by Christians; otherwise there had been no reason why he should make any remark upon it; for, as Jerome observes, Porphyry mentioned this supposed error of the evangelist as a reflection upon the church."

Matt. ix. 9: "And as Jesus passed out thence, he saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom. And he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him."

"Here, says Jerome, Porphyry and the Emperor Julian pretend that either the historian has told a lie, or else people were very silly to follow Jesus at his call; acting as if they were ready to follow any man that beckoned to them. Not considering, says Jerome, that before this time many great miracles and signs had been done by Jesus, of which the apostles were witnesses before they believed." (*Vol.* 4, *P. i.*, *p.* 30.)

Matt. xiii. 35: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, I will open my mouth in parables."

"That is a reference to Ps. lxxviii. 2, which is entitled a psalm of Asaph. In some copies of St. Matthew, where we have *by the prophet*, was read *by the prophet Isaiah*. This gave an occasion to an objection of Porphyry, which we meet with in the Breviarum upon the Psalter, generally ascribed to Jerome, but not reckoned his by the Benedictine editors. 'It is not Isaiah says this, but Asaph, says that writer. Therefore the impious Porphyry allegeth this against us, and says: Your evangelist Matthew was so ignorant as to say: Which was written by the prophet Isaiah: "I will open my mouth in parables; I will utter things kept secret from the foundation of the world."'" (*Vol. 2, P. 2, p.* 316.)

"This various reading was observed by Jerome in his comment upon Matt. xiii. 35, who has considered the difficulty, though he does not mention Porphyry. He thinks the original reading was thus: 'That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet Asaph,' by whom that psalm was composed. But some transcriber of St. Matthew, not recollecting Asaph to have been a prophet, and imagining therefore that it was a mistake, inserted the name of Isaiah, who was better known, in his room."

Upon Matt. iii. 3: "This is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

Here Jerome observes to this purpose: "Porphyry compares this place with the beginning of St. Mark's gospel, in which it is written: 'The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God. As it is written in the prophets; Behold, I send my messengers before thy face, which shall prepare the way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.' For since this quotation is composed out of Malachi [iii. 1] and Isaiah [xl. 3], he asks how it comes to pass that it is all said to be taken from Isaiah? To which question, says Jerome, ecclesiastical writers have answered largely: but I am of opinion that the name of Isaiah

has been added through the fault of the transcribers of the gospels." (*Vol.* 4, *p.* 10.)

Jerome has considered this point elsewhere. We hence perceive that at that time the name of Esaias was read in St. Mark as well as in St. Matthew; whereas now in St. Mark it is *in the prophets*. Concerning this various reading divers learned moderns may be consulted.

Theophylact, in his Commentary upon the beginning of St. John's gospel, has these expressions: "So that the sophism of that Gentile writer, Porphyry, falls to the ground. He, endeavoring to overthrow the gospel, makes use of these divisions. 'If, says he, the Son of God be the Word, he must be either outward word or inward word.' [That is, reason, thought, or speech.] But he is neither this nor that. Therefore he is not Word." (*Theo.*, *p.* 558.)

In a work of Jerome against the Pelagians we find this passage: "Our Lord says to his brethren that he should not go up to the feast of tabernacles (John vii. 8). And yet afterwards it is written: 'But when his brethren were gone up, then went he up also to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret' (ver. 10). He said he would not go, and yet he went. Here Porphyry barks, charging our Lord with fickleness and inconstancy." (*Vol.* 4, *p.* 521.)

In another place Jerome, speaking of the charity of the first believers at Jerusalem, and of the behavior of Ananias and his wife Sapphira (Acts v. 1–14), has this observation: "Lastly, the apostle Peter by no means imprecates death to them, as the foolish Porphyry [or, as in some MSS., philosopher] calumniates; but by the prophetic spirit declares the judgment of God, that the punishment of two persons might be an instruction to many." (*Vol.* 4, *p.* 792.)

Gal. i. 15, 16: "But when it pleased God to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, I conferred not with flesh and blood."

"I know, says Jerome, in his comment upon this text, that many so understand this expression of the apostle. And Porphyry likewise objects, that after the revelation of Christ, Paul did not vouchsafe to go to any men, to confer with them, lest, truly, after having been taught by God, he should receive instruction from flesh and blood. But I can never persuade myself to think that by flesh and

blood are to be understood Peter, James and John." (*Chap.* 1, *p.* 233.)

Gal. ii. 11–14, St. Paul says: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles.—— But when I saw that they walked not uprightly, according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all——"

In the preface to his Commentary upon the Epistle to the Galatians, Jerome speaks thus of this matter: "The wicked Porphyry not understanding this, in the first book of his book against us objects that Peter was reproved by Paul; that he did not proceed uprightly in preaching the gospel; aiming thereby to affix the blot of a mistake upon the one, and of peevishness upon the other. And hence he argues the falsehood of the whole doctrine, as if it were a mere invention, since the heads of the churches disagreed." (*Pr. Com. Gal.*, *p.* 223.)

Jerome occasionally refers to this objection of Porphyry in his commentary upon the fifty third chapter of the prophecies of Isaiah.

In a letter to Augustine upon this subject, Jerome tells him "how he and others had asserted the prudence of the apostles, and restrained the impudence of the blaspheming Porphyry, who says that Peter and Paul had a childish quarrel with one another; and that Paul burned with envy at the virtues of Peter, and had written in a boasting manner of things which either he never did, or if he did, it was mere peevishness to blame that in another which he had been guilty of himself." (*Vol.* 4, *p.* 622.)

"We may now look back upon what we have seen in Porphyry; whence, I think, it manifestly appears that he was well acquainted with the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. For we have had before us many of his objections against the book of Daniel, an objection against a text in the book of Genesis. And we have observed plain references to the gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John, the Acts of the Apostles, and the epistle to the Galatians; and in his remarks upon that epistle, probable references to other of St. Paul's epistles. There can be no question made that in his work against the Christians

many other books of the New Testament were quoted, or referred to by him. It is well that in the remaining fragments of his work we have evidences of so many references to them as there are. But it may be remembered that Jerome, who seems to have had the whole work before him, said not long ago: 'That if because of Porphyry's blasphemies another Cephas must be invented, lest Peter should be thought to have erred, innumerable passages must be struck out of the divine scriptures, which he has found fault with, because he did not understand them.' The places of scripture, therefore, which Porphyry had remarked upon were very numerous. Theodoret observes that Porphyry read the scriptures very carefully when he was composing his work against us."

I now proceed to observe some other passages of Porphyry, concerning the Christian religion, or the professors of it, and their affairs; where also there may be sóme references to our scriptures.

Eusebius, in his Evangelical Preparation, has these words: "And that evil demons have had no power of doing anything, since our Saviour's dwelling among men, the advocate of demons in our time somewhere testifies in his work against us in this manner: 'And now people wonder that this distemper has oppressed the city so many years, Esculapius and the other gods no longer conversing with men. For since Jesus has been honored, none have received any public benefit from the gods.' So says Porphyry in those very words." (*B.* 5, *c.* 1, *p.* 181.)

"Here is proof that the Christians were then very numerous in the Roman Empire. It likewise shows that Porphyry adopted the common cant, and was willing to expose them to popular reproach, by insinuating that they were the causes of the calamaties that befell the empire."

Upon Is. iii. 12, "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them," Jerome had this practical reflection: "Let us take care, therefore, that we be not oppressors among the people; lest, according to the impious Porphyry, matrons and women compose our senate; and they rule in the churches, and the priestly order be disposed of according to the good pleasure of women." (*Vol.* 3, *p.* 38.)

Jerome, in his letter to Ctesiphon, against the Pelagians, having mentioned divers events and proceedings hard to be accounted for, goes on: "And finally (which your good friend Porphyry useth to object to us), how came it to pass that the gracious and merciful God should suffer all nations, from Adam to Moses, and from Moses to the coming of Christ, to perish through ignorance of his laws and commands? Forasmuch that neither Britain, fruitful of tyrants, nor the Scotish nations, nor the barbarous people all around, were acquainted with Moses and the prophets. What necessity therefore was there that he should come in the end of the world, and not till after an innumerable multitude of men had perished." (*Vol.* 4, *p.* 481.)

I shall now make some extracts out of a book of letters of Augustine, in answer to six questions or difficulties, as taken from Porphyry, proposed by a pagan at Carthage, and sent to him by a presbyter named Deogratias.

The second question, and as taken from Porphyry, and supposed to be of great weight, was concerning the time of the Christian revelation.

"If Christ, as he says, be the way of salvation, the truth and the life (John xiv. 6), and they only who believe in him can be saved, what became of the men who lived before his coming?" Which difficulty is there enlarged upon. (*Aug. Ep.*, *n.* 8, *vol.* 2.)

Augustine, besides other things, says by way of solution, "that there were revelations made to men from the beginning of the world, such as were suited to the circumstances of things; and that all good men, in every part of the world, were accepted and saved. In the sacred Hebrew volumes, down from the time of Abraham, some are mentioned who had the knowledge of the true religion, who neither were descended from him, nor were of the people of Israel, nor ingrafted in among them. The like may be supposed of some in other nations, who also would obtain salvation." (*Ibid.*, *n.* 15).

The third of the six questions was to this purpose: "The Christians find fault with sacred rites and sacrifices, and incense, and other things in which the worship at the temples consists. And yet they allow that this kind of worship began in ancient times by the appointment of

God, who is also represented as wanting first-fruits." (*Ibid.*, *n.* 16).

"Which, as Augustine allows, shows that sacrifices were appointed of old, which were to be offered to God alone; and that they were designed for the good of men, not of God, who needed not anything, as is plainly declared (Ps. xvi. 2), 'I have said unto the Lord, Thou art my God, thou needest not my goods:' or in our version, 'my goodness extendeth not to thee.'"

The fourth of the six questions is to this purpose: "Christ threatens everlasting punishment to those who do not believe in him. And yet in another place he says: 'With what measure you mete, it shall be meted to you again.' Which is absurd and contradictory; for all measure must be limited to time." (*Ibid.*, *n.* 22.)

Jerome, or whoever is the author of the Breviary upon the Psalter, in a style and manner somewhat resembling Jerome's, extols the success of Peter and Paul in preaching the gospel. "God sent Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and other prophets. And 'in Judah was God known, his name was great in Israel,' a small tract of land only. He sent Peter, no philosopher nor orator, but an illiterate fisherman, who went from Jerusalem to Rome, and converted Rome, which the most eloquent men were not able to do. Again, he sent out the apostle Paul, and he preached the gospel from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum [Rom. xv. 19]. Alexander the Great, king of the Macedonians, with a powerful army did not conquer so many nations as they did. This Paul, who once was a persecutor, who says of himself, that he 'was rude in speech, though not in knowledge,' who made solecisms in his speech, subdued the whole world. Some one may say, all this was done for the sake of gain; so says Porphyry. Ignorant and indigent men, because they had nothing, performed some signs by magical art; which is no great matter; for the magicians in Egypt, and many others, have wrought signs. Let it be granted; and, as you say, the apostles wrought signs, that they might enrich themselves with the treasure of rich women whom they perverted. But then, why did they die? Why were they crucified? Others have wrought signs by magical arts, but they did not die for a dead man;

they were not crucified for a man that had been crucified. They knew him to be dead; and did they die without any reason?—Our victory is completed in the blood of the apostles; our faith is ratified in their blood. Let us therefore praise God, to whom be glory for ever and ever." (*Brev. Psal., vol.* 2, *p.* 334, 335).

Porphyry, like Celsus, greatly establishes the antiquity of the Christian books, and shows, so far as he directly quotes or refers to them, that they were read from the beginning as they are read to this day. The same history of the Christian facts, and the statements of the early progress of the gospel, and what we have learned from his infidel predecessors, are clearly deducible from this celebrated antagonist of our faith. As in the extracts above given there is a summary of his testimony gathered from the works of Jerome, and as he is little more or less than a second deponent to the work of Celsus, we proceed to hear the most distinguished of the ancient apostates, the anniversary of whose death, because of his malevolence to the Christians, is, we learn, celebrated to this day by a portion of the Asiatic church.

JULIAN THE APOSTATE.

Having heard the testimony of unbelieving Jews and Greeks, and the testimony of the two first and most distinguished writers against the Christian religion, we shall, to complete the whole, add the testimony of this most distinguished apostate, who not only renounced the religion, but wrote a volume against it. We have passed over the testimony of Ælius Aristides, Dion Chrysostom, Claudius Gallienus, of the second century, and various eminent writers who allude to the Christians, or to the sacred books, such as Lampridius, Dion Cassius, Longinus, Numenius, Aurelian, etc, who flourished about the beginning of the third century, and during the first half of it; because after the middle of the second century there can be little added which is not found in the works already quoted; and as to opposing authorities, none greater can be adduced than those which we have already heard. We are next to hear

an emperor and an apostate, and one of the most eminent writers and philosophers of his day; whose whole talents, learning, influence and authority are put in requisition against the cause. We shall, however, find in him the same sort of confirmation of the truth of Christianity, and of the antiquity and authority of the sacred writings, which we have found in his predecessors, served up indeed with a little more of the spice of hatred and illiberality to the Christian name and people.

Julius Constantius, brother of Constantine the Great, had two wives: Galla, by whom he had Gallus and several other children; and Basilina, a lady of an illustrious family, by whom he had Flavius Claudius Julianus, or Julian, who was her only child, she dying soon after his birth.

Julian was about six years of age when Constantine died, in 337: soon after which, in the year 339, when Julian was in the eighth year of his age, several of Constantine's family were put to death, and among them the father of Julian, and his eldest brother. The infirmities and weak constitution of Gallus, another brother of Julian, saved his life, it being thence concluded that he could not live long; and Julian's tender age was a security to him.

Constantius took care that they should be educated by Christian masters. When Julian was about fourteen or fifteen years of age, he and his brother Gallus were sent to a palace in Cappadocia, where they lived at ease, but were well guarded; so that, as Julian says, they were all shut up as in a prison. Here they spent about six years, till the year 351, when Gallus was made Cæsar. At that time Julian was permitted to come to Constantinople: but his fine parts making him to be much taken notice of, he was sent away to Nicomedia, where Libanius then taught rhetoric. But Julian had been particularly charged not to converse with him, nor learn anything of him. However, he had here a good deal of liberty, and was acquainted with divers heathen philosophers; some of whom came hither on purpose to pay their respects to him. Here Julian, at the age of twenty, took a liking to Hellenism: and it is said that some of these philosophers did then give him hopes of being emperor. Constantius had information concerning him: and Julian, for preventing disagreeable sus-

picions, as Socrates says, was shaved, and made profession of being a monk. He privately studied philosophy, and publicly read the scriptures: and he was ordained reader in the church of Nicomedia.

In 354 Gallus was killed, and Julian was suspected of disaffection: he was sent for, therefore, to come to Milan, where the emperor then was, and a guard was set upon him. In this danger Julian's life was saved by the intercession of the Empress Eusebia, who obtained leave for him to travel into Greece: which was very agreeable to Julian, who wanted nothing more than to complete his studies at Athens; and the emperor likewise was willing he should employ his time in matters of literature rather than politics. In the year 355 Julian arrived at Athens; where also Basil and Gregory Nazianzen were studying eloquence and other parts of polite literature. But Julian made no long stay there; for in the same year he was sent for by Constantius to Milan, and on the sixth day of November, 355, he was declared Cæsar, that he might go into Gaul and take the command of the army there: and Britain and Spain were also put under his government. A few days after that, Constantius gave him in marriage his sister Helena.

Julian left Milan on the first day of December, and before the end of the year came to Vienne in Gaul. In the wars with the Franks and Germans, who had made incursions into the country, he was very successful, and gained a great deal of honor and reputation there and all over the empire.

In the year 360, about the month of March or April, in the twenty-ninth year of his age, he was against his will declared Augustus by the soldiers at Paris who in a manner compelled him to accept the title, and to take upon him the government, no longer in the quality of Cæsar, but of emperor.

Julian, therefore, sent some of his officers with a letter to Constantine, who was then in the East preparing for the war with the Persians, giving him an account of what had been done, desiring him to yield to him the title of Augustus, and promising him all the submission that could be expected from a second and a partner in the empire.

Julian's officers found Constantine at Cæsarea in Cappadocia; who resented the conduct of Julian, and sent him a letter requiring him to be content with the title of Cæsar. That letter was received by Julian at Paris, and was read in the presence of the people and the soldiers. Julian offered to submit to the proposal of Constantius, if the soldiers approved of it; but with loud acclamations they confirmed to him the title of Augustus. Of this, likewise, Julian sent an account to Constantius, and afterwards several letters passed between them.

Julian came to Vienne near the end of the year 360, about which time he lost his wife Helena. He was still at Vienne on the 6th day of January in 361; soon after which he went forward into Illyricum, and took possession of Sirmium, the chief city. Constantius died in Cilicia the 3rd day of November, 361: on the 11th day of December following, Julian made his entrance into Constantinople with the general acclamation of the people, attended by the senate, by whom he was proclaimed emperor.

Here he stayed about eight months; and having settled matters, and conferred many favors upon that city, the place of his nativity, he set out for Antioch in Syria, where he arrived in July, 362. And having completed his preparations for the war with the Persians, he set out with his army from Antioch in the beginning of March, 363. In an action with the Persians he received a wound with a dart on the 26th day of June; and being carried to his tent, he expired there in the night of the 26th day of June, 363, in a calm and composed manner, entertaining his friends with philosophical discourses.

Thus died Julian in the 32nd year of his age, having been Cæsar about seven years and a half; Augustus, after his proclamation by the soldiers in Gaul, about three years; and sole emperor, after the death of Constantius, a year and almost eight months.

Julian appears to have renounced Christianity, and to have embraced Hellenism, about the twentieth year of his age; but it was kept very secret, and was known to a very few only, who were his intimate friends, until after he was declared Augustus by the soldiers in Gaul; and even after that he was upon the reserve: for as Ammianus has ob-

served: "When he was in Venice, in his way to Constantinople, he still pretended to follow the Christian rite, from which he had departed a good while before; and privately with his friends practiced augury and divination, and all other things customary with the Greeks: and in the month of January [in the year 361], on the festival called Epiphany, he went to the church of the Christians." (*Am.*, *b.* 21, *c.* 2.)

But upon his being declared sole emperor, all reserve was laid aside. As the same historian says: "Though he had long dissembled his respect for the gods, to which he had been inclined from his youth, now finding himself at liberty to act as he saw good, he made express edicts for opening the temples, erecting altars, and performing sacrifices." (*Am.*, *b.* 22, *c.* 5.)

It can not be denied that Julian was a persecutor. Ammianus thought his prohibiting the Christians to have a liberal education a rigorous proceeding. Eutropius also, another heathen and contemporary, says that Julian bore hard upon the Christians, though without putting them to death. Socrates, as we have already seen, says he avoided the excessive cruelty of Dioclesian's persecution; and other Christian writers say that he envied Christians the honor of martyrdom. Jerome, in his Chronicle, gives this character of Julian's persecution, that it was mild and enticing, rather than compelling men to sacrifice: but he acknowledgeth that many were drawn aside. Orosius speaks to the like purpose. Gregory Nazianzen, near the end of his second invective against Julian, remarking upon his Misopogon, or satire against the people of Antioch, expresseth himself after this manner: "You boast mightily of your never eating to excess, as a wonderful thing; but say not how you have oppressed the Christians, an innocent and a numerous body of men. Not considering, that whether some particular person is troubled with crudities, or not, is a thing of little consequence to the public; whereas, by the persecution which you have raised, the whole Roman Empire has been disturbed." (*Gregor.*, *Or.* 4, *p.* 133, 134.)

No ancient Christian writer, perhaps, has drawn Julian's character to greater advantage than Prudentius, who

ascribes to him great fortitude, and not only says that he was a fine speaker and writer, but also that he made good laws, and was a good emperor; but he was an enemy to the true religion; he was faithful to the interests of the state, but was unfaithful to God, and worshiped innumerable deities, which he shows largely.

But I would take this opportunity to refer curious and inquisitive readers to several learned moderns who have made remarks upon Julian's writings and upon his conduct as an emperor, and are not unfavorable in their judgments concerning him.

It has correctly been observed "that there was such a mixture of good and bad qualities in this prince that it is easy to praise and blame him at the same time, without deviating from the truth."

The works of Julian are thus noticed by Lardner:

"It can not be necessary that I should take notice of all Julian's works; but there is one which can not be omitted. For at length, in his great zeal, in the midst of his preparations for the Persian war, and when he was almost ready to set out on that expedition, he was at the pains to compose an argument against the Christian religion. Jerome says it consisted of seven books; and in another place he has quoted the seventh book of that work; but Cyril of Alexandria, in the preface to his confutation of it, mentions only three books written by Julian against the holy gospels and the venerable religion of the Christians. Cyril, who dedicates this defense of our religion, in ten books, to Theodosius the younger, did not write, as is supposed, before the year 432. Whether any part of Julian's work was lost between the time of Jerome and Cyril, or whether it was differently divided, I can not say. But that Cyril mentions three books only because he intended to answer a part only of the work, I can not believe. When he says that Julian had written three books against the Christian religion, I suppose he intends the whole of the work which he had before him.

"Jerome seems to say that Julian's work was composed in the Persian expedition. But I do not think it needful to suppose, as some have done, that he intended to say it was written after Julian set out from Antioch in his march

toward Persia. I think we may rely upon Libanius for the time of this work, who, as cited by Socrates, says: "In the winter season, during the long nights, the emperor set himself to confute those books which make the man of Palestine a God, and the Son of God; and in a long and unanswerable argument he showed how trifling and absurd those things are which are admired by them. In which work he excelled the Tyrian old man; let the Tyrian forgive me that I say he was exceeded by his son.' But, says Socrates, I am of opinion that if Porphyry had been an emperor he would have preferred his work above Julian's." (*Socrat., b.* 3, *p.* 196.)

We are informed by some or all our ecclesiastical historians who write of Julian, that he sent for some of the Jewish nation, and inquired of them why they did not now sacrifice as the law of Moses directed. They told him that they were not to sacrifice at any place except Jerusalem; and the temple being destroyed, they were obliged to forbear that part of worship. He thereupon promised to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem. And we still have a letter of Julian's inscribed to "the community of the Jews," in which he boasts of his having abolished some taxes which had been laid upon them, and calls their venerable patriarch Iulus his brother. He also entreats their prayers for him, "that when he shall be returned victorious from the Persian war, he may rebuild the holy city of Jerusalem, which for a long time they had earnestly desired to see inhabited, and that he might come and dwell there himself, and together with them offer up prayers to the Supreme Deity."

This letter, however extraordinary, must be reckoned genuine, for Sozomen expressly says "that Julian wrote to the patriarchs and rulers of the Jews, and to their whole nation, desiring them to pray for him and the prosperity of his reign." That is an exact description of the letter we have, which is inscribed to the community of the Jews.

It was written in the year 362, as Pletterie supposes—in the beginning of that year, say Tillemont and the Bishop of Gloucester.

There is much on record concerning his abortive attempt to rebuild Jerusalem to please the Jews and frustrate the

predictions of the Christians. But the labor of separating the truth from the fable, if there be any truth in the matter, would be much more expensive than the value of all that could be gained from it. The reader will no doubt have observed that our method has hitherto been, not to collect everything that might be collected, but only those testimonies that are worthy of credit, and which may be relied on with all the certainty of historic evidences. We therefore hasten to take some notice of the work of Julian against the Christians.

Cyril's answer to it consists of ten books, the first of which is an introduction of his own. In the second book he begins to make quotations from Julian's work; and from the many passages quoted from it by Cyril in his several books, it may be concluded that Julian's performance was intended to be a labored confutation both of Judaism and Christianity.

Julian's preface or introduction to his work, as we learn from Cyril, has these words: "I think it right for me to show to all men the reasons by which I have been convinced that the religion of the Galileans is a human contrivance, badly put together, having in it nothing divine; but abusing the childish, irrational part of the soul, which delights in fable, they have produced a heap of wonderful works to give it the appearance of truth." (*Cyril, contr. Julian, b.* 2, *p.* 39.)

Afterwards, and near the beginning of the work: "It will be worth the while," he says, "to compare together the things said of the Deity by the Greeks and the Hebrews; and then we shall inquire of those who are neither Greeks nor Jews, but of the sect of the Galileans, why they have preferred their notions to ours; and then, why they have not stood to them neither, but forsaking them also, they have taken to a way peculiar to themselves, holding nothing good and valuable taught by us Greeks or by the Hebrews, the disciples of Moses; but collecting what is bad in both, they have taken atheism from the Jewish absurdity, and a wicked, dissolute life from our carelessness and indifference. And this is what they call a most excellent religion." (*Ibid., p.* 42, 43.)

"That Moses says God was the God of Israel only, and

of Judea, and that they were his chosen people, I shall demonstrate presently; and that not only he, but the prophets after him, and Jesus the Nazarene, say the same; yea, and Paul also, who exceeded all the jugglers and impostors that ever were." For this he presently after alleges Exod. iv. 22, 23; v. 3; vii. 1. (*Ibid*, *b.* 3, *p.* 100.)

Soon afterwards Julian proceeds in this manner: "But that God from the beginning took care of the Jews only, and that they were his chosen lot, appears not only from Moses and Jesus, but from Paul also; though this may be justly thought strange in Paul; but upon every occasion, like a polypus upon the rocks, he changeth his notions of God: at one time affirming that the Jews only are God's heritage; at another time, to persuade the Greeks and gain them over to his side, saying: 'Is he the God of the Jews only? Yes, of the Gentiles also.' It is reasonable, therefore, to ask Paul, If he was not the God of Jews only, but also of the Gentiles, why did he, for the most part at least, send to the Jews the prophetic spirit, and Moses, and the anointing, and the prophets and the law, and miracles, and prodigies of fables? And you hear them saying, 'Man did eat angels' food.' At length he sent Jesus also to them; not a prophet, not the anointing, not a master, not a preacher of the late mercy of God to us. However, he overlooked us for myriads, or, if you please, for thousands of years, and left us in such ignorance as to worship idols, as you say, from east to west, and from north to south, excepting only a small nation about two thousand years ago, planted in a part of Palestine. But if he be the God of all and the Creator of all, why did he neglect us?" (*Ibid.*, *b.* 3, *p.* 106.)

Julian objects against the Mosaic account of the creation of the world, the fall of man, and the confusion of languages. He finds fault also with the decalogue of Mos s, which, as he says, contained no precepts that are not equally regarded by all nations, excepting these two: "Thou shalt worship no other gods," and "Remember the Sabbath day." He prefers Lycurgus and Solon to Moses. "He reflects upon David and Sampson," Cyril says, "as not very remarkable for valor, and exceeded by many Greeks and Egyptians; and all their power was confined

within the narrow limits of Judea." He says the Jews never had any general equal to Alexander or Cæsar. The wise Solomon is not to be compared with some eminent men among the Greeks, such as Phocylides, Theognis, Isocrates. Moreover, as he adds, Solomon is said to have been overcome by women and therefore does not deserve to be called a wise man. (*B.* 5, *p.* 166.)

Julian cavils at several prophecies of the Old Testament, which were applied to Jesus by his followers. To this purpose I shall allege a passage here, though it be somewhat prolix: "Since, therefore, they differ from the Jews of the present time, and say that they are the true Israelites, and that they highly respect Moses and the other prophets after him, let us see wherein they agree with them; and we shall begin with Moses, who, as they say, foretold the future nativity of Jesus. Moses, then, not once, nor twice, nor thrice, but often, taught the worship of one God only; others he calls angels or lords; but he never teaches any other second God, neither like nor unlike, as you do. If you have one word in Moses favoring such expressions, you should produce it. What he says is: 'For the Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a prophet, from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me. Unto him shall ye hearken' (Deut. xviii. 15). This can not be spoken concerning the son of Mary. But, if we grant you that, he would be like unto Moses, not unto God; meaning a prophet like himself, and from men, not from God. That text, also, Gen. xlix. 10, 'The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet,' is not said of him, but of David's kingdom, which appears to have ended in King Zedekiah. But that none of these things belong to Jesus is manifest; for neither is he of Judah; and how should he be so, when, according to you, he was not born of Joseph, but of the Holy Ghost? When you reckon up the genealogy of Joseph, you carry it up to Judah; but you have not been able to contrive this dexterously; for Matthew and Luke have been shown to differ with one another about the genealogy." Matt. i.; Luke iii. (*B.* 8, *p.* 253.)

"Jesus," says Julian, as quoted by Cyril, "whom you celebrate, was one of Cæsar's subjects. If you dispute it,

I will prove it by and by; but it may be as well done now. For yourselves allow that he was enrolled with his father and mother in the time of Cyrenius; but after he was born, what good did he do to his relations? For 'they would not, as it is said, believe on him.' And yet that stiff-necked and hard-hearted people believed Moses. But Jesus, who 'rebuked the winds, and walked on the seas, and cast out demons,' and, as you will have it, made the heaven and the earth [though none of his disciples presumed to say this of him, except John only, nor he clearly and distinctly; however, let it be allowed that he said so], could not order his designs so as to save his friends and relations." Luke ii.; John vii. 5; Matt. xiv. 25; Mark vi. 48; John i. (*B.* 6, *p.* 213.)

"But Jesus having persuaded a few among you, and those the worst of men, has now been celebrated about three hundred years, having done nothing in his life-time worthy of remembrance, unless any one thinks it a mighty matter to heal lame and blind people, and exorcise demoniacs in the villages of Bethsaida and Bethany." (*B.* 6, *p.* 191.)

"But you are so unhappy as not to adhere to the things delivered to you by the apostles; but they have been altered by you for the worse, and carried on to yet greater impiety. For neither Paul, nor Matthew, nor Luke, nor Mark have dared to call Jesus God. But honest John, understanding that a great multitude of men in the cities of Greece and Italy were seized with this distemper, and hearing likewise, as I suppose, that the tombs of Peter and Paul were respected and frequented, though as yet privately only; however, having heard of it, he then first presumed to advance that doctrine." (*B.* 10, *p.* 327.)

"But you miserable people," says Julian, "at the same time that ye refuse to worship the shield that fell down from Jupiter, and is preserved by us, which was sent down to us by the great Jupiter, or our father Mars, as a certain pledge of the perpetual government of our city; you worship the wood of the cross, and make signs of it upon your foreheads, and fix it upon your doors. Shall we for this most hate the understanding, or most pity the simple and ignorant among you, who are so very unhappy as to

leave the immortal gods and go over to a dead Jew?" (*B.* 6, *p.* 194.)

Julian blames the Christians for having destroyed temples and altars, and then goes on: "You have killed not only our people who persisted in the ancient religion, but likewise heretics, equally deceived with yourselves; but who did not mourn the dead man exactly in the same manner that you do. But these are your own inventions, for Jesus has nowhere directed you to do such things, nor yet Paul. The reason is that they never expected you would arrive at such power. They were content with deceiving maid-servants and slaves, and by them some men and women, such as Cornelius and Sergius. If there were then any other men of eminence brought over to you, I mean in the times of Tiberius and Claudius, when these things happened, let me pass for a liar in everything I say."* (*B.* 6, *p.* 206.)

"But why do you not observe a pure diet as well as the Jews? but eat all things like herbs of the field, believing Peter, because he said: 'What God has cleansed, that call not thou common' (Acts x. 15.) What does that mean, unless that God formerly declared them to be impure, but now has made them clean? For Moses, speaking of four-footed beasts, says: 'Whatsoever divideth the hoof, and cheweth the cud, is clean; but whatsoever does not do so, that is unclean' (Levit. xi. 4; Deut. xiv. 6). If, then, since the vision of Peter, the swine has chewed the cud, let us believe him; for that would be truly wonderful, if since Peter's vision it has got that faculty; but if he feigned that

* "This passage doth wonderfully confirm the genuineness of the book of the Acts of the Apostles, and the truth of the history contained it it. Julian challengeth the Christians, after he had excepted the two above mentioned, to produce the names of any more eminent men converted [from the Gentiles] to Christianity in the reigns of Tiberius and Claudius. Which is a proof that Julian did not and could not contest the truth of the history in the Acts of the Apostles, and likewise that he was well satisfied the Christians had no other authentic history of things done at that time. He knew they relied upon the accounts given in that book, and that they did not pretend to have any other authentic accounts of them. Once more: since the accounts given in the New Testament, and particularly in the Acts of the Apostles, of the conversions of 'slaves and maid servants, and of Cornelius and Sergius Paulus,' are allowed to be true, it is reasonable to believe also that the grounds and reasons of their conversion to the Christian faith are truly and faithfully related; and consequently that they were not deceived or imposed upon, but were convinced, upon sufficient and undeniable evidence, such as ought to sway and satisfy wise and good men."

vision, to use your phrase, the revelation at the tanner's, why should you believe him in a thing of that nature?" (*B* 9, *p.* 314.)

"But omitting many other things, says Julian, by which I might show the law of Moses to be perpetual, do you show me some place where that is said which is affirmed by Paul with so much assurance, 'that Christ is the end of the law.'" (*B.* 9, *p.* 320.)

"But now I must again return to them. Why then are you not circumcised? To which they answer: Paul says it is 'the circumcision of the heart' which was required, not 'that of the flesh.'" (*B.* 10, *p.* 351.)

"We can not, say they, keep the feast of unleavened bread, or the passover, 'because Christ has been once crucified for us' I. Cor. v. 7". (*B.* 10. *p.* 354.)

"Since you have forsaken us, why do you not adhere to the Jews? And why do you not sacrifice? The Jews indeed are hindered, because they have no temple or altar; but you, who have a new sacrifice, have no need of Jerusalem." (*B.* 9, *p.* 305, 306).

"And that not only they of his time, but that some of those who at the beginning received the word from Paul were such, is apparent from what Paul himself says, writing to them. For I presume he was not so void of shame as to send them such reproaches in his letter to them if he had not known them to be just. These are the things which he writes to his disciples and to themselves: 'Be not deceived: neither idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God. And you are not ignorant, brethren, that such were you also. But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified in the name of Jesus Christ' (I. Cor. vi. 9–11). You see he says 'they were such; but they had been sanctified and washed, having been cleansed and scoured with water, which penetrates even to the soul.' And baptism, which can not heal the leprosy, nor the gout, nor the dysentery, nor any other distemper of the body, takes away adulteries, extortions, and all other sins of the soul." (*B.* 7, *p.* 245.)

There is another like passage of Julian in his Cæsars,

which may not be quite omitted; and it may be as well taken now as hereafter. In his satire upon Constantine, he brings in his son Constantius in the presence of his father, proclaiming to all in this manner: 'Whosoever is a ravisher, a murderer, guilty of sacrilege, or any other abomination, let him come boldly. For when I have washed him with this water, I will immediately make him clean and innocent: and if he commit the same crimes over again, I will make him, after he has thumped his breast and beat his head, as clean as before." (*Jul. Cæs., p.* 336.)

Upon this I need not say anything myself, after all that has been said just now. I may answer it in the words of Dr. Bently, whose remarks upon it, in the borrowed name of Phileleutherus Lipsiensis, are to this purpose: "A ridiculous and stale banter, used by Celsus and others before Julian, upon the Christian doctrines, and baptism and repentance and remission of sins. Baptism is rallied as 'mere washing,' and repentance as 'thumping the breast,' and other outward grimace: the inward grace, and the intrinsic change of the mind, are left out of the character. And whom are we to believe—these pagans, or our own selves? Are we to fetch our notions of the sacraments from scraps of Julian and Celsus? or from the scripture, the pure fountain, and from what we read, know, and profess? And yet the banter came more decently out of Celsus, an Epicurean's mouth, than out of Julian's, the most bigoted creature in the world. He to laugh at expiation by baptism, whose whole life, after his apostasy, was a continued course of washings, purgations, expiations, with the most absurd ceremonies! addicted to the whole train of superstitions, omens, presages, prodigies, specters, dreams, visions, auguries, oracles, magic, theurgic, psychomantic: whose whole court in a manner consisted of haruspices and sacrificuli, and philosophers as silly as they: who was always poring in the entrails of cattle, to find futurities there: who, if he had returned victor out of Persia (as his very pagan friends jested on him), would have extinguished the whole race of bulls and cows by the number of his sacrifices! I have drawn this character of him from his own writings, and the heathens his contemporaries, that I might not bring suspected testimonies from Christian authors."

We will now take a summary view of what we have seen in Julian's work against the Christians:

"He argues against the Jews as well as against them: but we have supposed it expedient to take more especial notice of what he writes relating to Jesus Christ and his followers. And he has borne a valuable testimony to the history and to the books of the New Testament, as all must acknowledge who have read the extracts just made from his work. He allows that Jesus was born in the reign of Augustus, at the time of the taxing made in Judea by Cyrenius: that the Christian religion had its rise and began to be propagated in the times of the Emperors Tiberius and Claudius. He bears witness to the genuineness and authenticity of the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, and the Acts of the Apostles: and he so quotes them as to intimate that these were the only historical books received by the Christians as of authority, and the only authentic memoirs of Jesus Christ and his apostles, and the doctrine preached by them. He allows their early date, and even argues for it. He also quotes or plainly refers to the Acts of the Apostles, to St. Paul's epistles to the Romans, the Corinthians and the Galatians. He does not deny the miracles of Jesus Christ, but allows him to have 'healed the blind, and the lame and demoniacs,' and 'to have rebuked the winds, and walked upon the waves of the sea.' He endeavors indeed to diminish these works, but in vain. The consequence is undeniable; such works are good proofs of a divine mission. He endeavors also to lessen the number of the early believers in Jesus, and yet he acknowledgeth that there were 'multitudes of such men in Greece and Italy,' before St. John wrote his gospel. He likewise affects to diminish the quality of the early believers; and yet acknowledgeth that, beside 'men servants and maid servants,' Cornelius, a Roman centurion at Cesarea, and Sergius Paulus, proconsul of Cyprus, were converted to the faith of Jesus before the end of the reign of Claudius. And he often speaks with great indignation of Peter and Paul, those two great apostles of Jesus, and successful preachers of his gospel. So that, upon the whole, he has undesignedly borne witness to the truth of many things recorded in the books of the New Testament: he aimed to

overthrow the Christian religion, but has confirmed it: his arguments against it are perfectly harmless, and insufficient to unsettle the weakest Christian. He justly excepts to some things introduced into the Christian profession by the late professors of it, in his own time or sooner; but has not made one objection of moment against the Christian religion, as contained in the genuine and authentic books of the New Testament."

Before we dismiss the work of Julian, there is a testimony to the ancient Christians to be gleaned from one of the letters of Julian to Arsacius, high priest of Galatia, of some value, coming from an enemy so implacable:

"It is not sufficient that you are unblamable yourself; all the priests in Galatia ought to be so likewise. I will therefore that you persuade, and even compel, all the priests in Galatia to live soberly; otherwise do you depose them from the priestly office, unless they and their wives and children and servants do religiously worship the gods; and also forbear to converse with the servants, children and wives of the Galileans, who are impious towards the gods, and prefer impiety to religion. You are likewise to order them not to frequent the theater, nor to drink in taverns, nor to exercise any mean or sordid employments. Such as hearken to your directions, you are to encourage; others you are to reject. You are also to erect hospitals in every city, that strangers also may share in our humanity; and not only those of our religion, but others likewise, if they are necessitous." "He then tells him what allowances he had made for that purpose. For, says he, it is a shame, when there are no beggars among the Jews, and the impious Galileans relieve not only their own people, but ours also, that our poor should be neglected by us, and be left helpless and destitute." (*Ep.* 49, *p.* 429.)

Again, in his Misopogon, a satire upon the Antiochans, p. 337, he says:

"I suppose you are very happy because you have renounced all kinds of servitude, first to the gods, then to the laws, and lastly to me, who am the guardian of the laws." (*Ep.* 62, *p.* 356.)

And soon after: "But it is said that Chi and Kappa never did the city any harm: it is hard to know the meaning of

this wise riddle of yours: but by some interpreters of your city we have been informed they are initial letters of names, the one denoting Christ, the other Constantius." (*Ibid.*, *p.* 357.)

"But you love Christ and esteem him the tutelar patron of your city, instead of Jupiter and Apollo of Daphne.—Many of you, it seems, I have offended, in a manner all of you, the senate, the rich, the people. The greatest part of the people, or rather the whole of them, are offended with me because they are in love with impiety, and they see that I embrace and adhere to the religion of my ancestors." (*Ibid.*, *p.* 357.)

"You say I wage war with Chi, and you admire Kappa." (*Ibid.*, *p.* 360.)

Omitting some other things, Julian went on a feast day to pay his homage in the temple of Apollo at Daphne, in the neighborhood of Antioch, but there were neither people nor sacrifices; the priest had only a small victim of his own preparing. Of this Julian complains grievously, that so large a city had not provided some bulls for a sacrifice on that solemnity: "You ought, says he, to have sacrificed both privately and publicly. But you let your wives carry away everything to the Galileans; and they maintain the poor with your goods, and so bring their impiety into esteem." (*Ibid.*, *p.* 363.)

The Christians must have been exemplary indeed, when such a spirit could give such a testimony to their liberality—the best proof of a good and useful religion. Is it not evident from the last quotation that in Antioch at this time Christianity had gained the ascendency over paganism?

Before we close these testimonies, it may be gratifying to some to give a few extracts from the most accomplished and the most skeptical historian of the decline and fall of the Roman power. With all these documents before him, and with all his skepticism, Gibbon speaks as follows:

"A candid but rational inquiry into the progress and establishment of Christianity may be considered as a very essential part of the history of the Roman Empire. While the great body was invaded by open violence, or undermined by slow decay, a pure and humble religion gently insinuated itself into the minds of men, grew up in silence and

obscurity, derived new vigor from opposition, and finally erected the triumphant banner of the cross on the ruins of the capitol. Nor was the influence of Christianity confined to the limits of the Roman Empire. After a revolution of thirteen or fourteen centuries, that religion is still professed by the nations of Europe, the most distinguished portion of the human kind in arts and learning as well as in arms. By the industry and zeal of the Europeans, it has been diffused to the most distant shores of Asia and Africa; and by the means of their colonies has been firmly established from Canada to Chili, in a world unknown to the ancients.

"Our curiosity is naturally tempted to inquire by what means the Christian faith obtained so remarkable a victory over the established religions of the earth. To this inquiry, an obvious but satisfactory answer may be returned; that it was owing to the convincing evidence of the doctrine itself, and to the ruling providence of its great Author. But as truth and reason seldom find so favorable a reception in the world, and as the wisdom of providence frequently condescends to use the passions of the human heart, and the general circumstances of mankind, as instruments to execute its purpose, we may still be permitted, though with becoming submission, to ask, not indeed what were the first, but what were the secondary causes of the rapid growth of the Christian Church? It will perhaps appear that it was most effectually favored and assisted by the five following causes:

"1. The inflexible and, if we may use the expression, the intolerant zeal of the Christians, derived, it is true, from the Jewish religion, but purified from the narrow and unsocial spirit, which, instead of inviting, had deterred the Gentiles from embracing the law of Moses."

"2. The doctrine of a future life, improved by every additional circumstance which could give weight and efficacy to that important truth.

"3. The miraculous power which was ascribed to the primitive churches.

"4. The pure and austere morals of the Christians.

"5. The union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman Empire.

"It has been observed, with truth as well as propriety, that the conquests of Rome prepared and facilitated those of Christianity. In the second chapter of this work we have attempted to explain in what manner the most civilized provinces of Europe, Asia and Africa were united under the dominion of one sovereign, and gradually connected by the most intimate ties of laws, of manners, and of language. The Jews of Palestine, who had fondly expected a temporal deliverer, gave so cold a reception to the miracles of the divine prophet that it was found unnecessary to publish, or at least to preserve, any Hebrew gospel. The authentic histories of the actions of Christ were composed in the Greek language, at a considerable distance from Jerusalem, and after the gentile converts were grown extremely numerous. As soon as those histories were translated into the Latin tongue, they were perfectly intelligible to all the subjects of Rome, excepting only the peasants of Syria and Egypt, for whose benefit particular versions were afterwards made. The public highways, which had been constructed for the use of the legions, opened an easy passage for the Christian missionaries from Damascus to Corinth, and from Italy to the extremity of Spain or Britain; nor did those spiritual conquerors encounter any of the obstacles which usually retard or prevent the introduction of a foreign religion into a distant country. There is the strongest reason to believe that before the reigns of Dioclesian and Constantine the faith of Christ had been preached in every province and all the great cities of the empire.

"If we seriously consider the purity of the Christian religion, the sanctity of its moral precepts, and the innocent as well as austere lives of the greater number of those who, during the first ages, embraced the faith of the gospel, we should naturally suppose that so benevolent a doctrine would have been received with due reverence, even by the unbelieving world; that the learned and the polite, however they might deride the miracles, would have esteemed the virtues of the new sect; and that the magistrates, instead of persecuting, would have protected an order of men who yielded the most passive obedience to the laws, though they declined the active cares of war and

government. If, on the other hand, we recollect the universal toleration of polytheism, as it was invariably maintained by the faith of the people, the incredulity of philosophers, and the policy of the Roman senate and emperors, we are at a loss to discover what new offense the Christians had committed, what new provocation could exasperate the mild indifference of antiquity, and what new motives could urge the Roman princes, who beheld without concern a thousand forms of religion subsisting in peace under their gentle sway, to inflict a severe punishment on any part of their subjects who had chosen for themselves a singular, but an inoffensive, mode of faith and worship.

"The religious policy of the ancient world seems to have assumed a more stern and intolerant character, to oppose the progress of Christianity. About fourscore years after the death of Christ, his innocent disciples were punished with death by the sentence of a proconsul of the most amiable and philosophic character, and according to the laws of an emperor distinguished by the wisdom and justice of his general administration. The apologies which were repeatedly addressed to the successors of Trajan are filled with the most pathetic complaints, that the Christians who obeyed the dictates and solicited the liberty of conscience were alone, among all the subjects of the Roman Empire, excluded from the common benefits of their auspicious government."

Concerning the persecution of Nero, as related by Tacitus, he says:

"The most skeptical criticism is obliged to respect the truth of this extraordinary fact, and the integrity of this celebrated passage of Tacitus. The former is confirmed by the diligent and accurate Suetonius, who mentions the punishment which Nero inflicted on the Christians, a sect of men who had embraced a new and criminal superstition."

Respecting that under Trajan and Pliny, he observes:

"About ten years afterwards, under the reign of Trajan, the younger Pliny was intrusted by his friend and master with the government of Bithynia and Pontus. He soon found himself at a loss to determine by what rule of justice or of law he should direct his conduct in the execution of

an office the most repugnant to his humanity. Pliny had never assisted at any judicial proceedings against the Christians, with whose name alone he seems to be acquainted; and he was totally uninformed with regard to the nature of their guilt, the method of their conviction, and the degree of their punishment. In this perplexity he had recourse to his usual expedient of submitting to the wisdom of Trajan an impartial, and in some respects a favorable, account of the new superstition, requesting the emperor that he would condescend to resolve his doubts and to instruct his ignorance.

"The answer of Trajan, to which the Christians of the succeeding age have frequently appealed, discovers as much regard for justice and humanity as could be reconciled with his mistaken notions of religious policy."

I must close by observing that from the most careful examination which I have bestowed on this work of Gibbon, I know not a single document in the preceding extracts to which, as a historian, he objects.

SUM OF THE TESTIMONY.

It is a part of the hard destiny of infidels that, in opposing the well established pretensions of Jesus the Nazarene, they are constrained to institute a species of warfare as unparalleled in the annals of literary, scientific and philosophical discussion as it is at variance with all the laws and requisitions of candor, logic and the rational investigation of truth. Complaints are heard from their school which have never been heard from any other. Whoever heard it advanced against the single fact of the simple existence of any person, that none but his friends have written his history? Must we discredit the existence of all the most famous names of Grecian and Roman antiquity, because all their first and principal biographers were their personal friends and admirers? Yet some, not all indeed, of the learned doctors of Atheism and Infidelity, make this their cardinal objection to the existence and character of Jesus the Messiah, that his personal friends and attendants were his biographers!

If possible, still more preposterous is their demand for unbelieving witnesses in attestation of the principal gospel facts. I presume in no court of inquiry in any age, nation or sect, that of infidelity alone excepted, has a premium been offered for unbelieving testimony. The case is so singular that not one of a thousand of my readers, unless I explain, will understand what I mean in this case by *unbelieving* testimony. Permit me then to explain: "Produce, say they, in plain language, witnesses of the miracles, death, burial, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, who, while they solemnly depose that they witnessed the miracles of Christ; his death, burial resurrection and ascension; or the wonderful gifts of the Holy Spirit vouchsafed to the apostles in proclaiming these facts, explicitly affirm that they do not believe any of the things which they report!" "Produce, say the infidels, good credible witnesses of the miracles, or resurrection of Jesus, who were themselves unbelievers of those facts. We are infidels ourselves, and we greatly prefer the testimony of infidels, especially when they depose they saw and heard that which they again say they did not see or hear! In our schools and courts of investigation, in our halls of science, and in our churches of free inquiry, we give a decided preference to that witness who swears to what he did not see, and therefore does not believe, over him who affirms that he believes what he says he saw and heard. Amongst us infidels, nothing so much vitiates and falsifies testimony as the belief of a witness. If a witness believe what he affirms, it is sufficient proof to us that he is a liar, and unworthy of credit; but if he believe not what he avers, then is his testimony worthy of our implicit confidence" So reasons every infidel who rejects the testimony of Matthew, John, James, Paul, Peter, or any of the apostles, because they were the friends and companions of Jesus, and who demand in preference to this the affirmations of unbelievers.

Either this is in truth, and without exaggeration, the philosophy of evidence in all skeptical schools; or they wilfully and wittingly ask us to perform what they know to be a *physical impossibility;* and this is only saving themselves from the imputation of the most palpable folly, by proving themselves the most arrant knaves. And is it not

a physical impossibility? Can any person be produced, who lived in any past era of the world, as a witness of contemporaneous facts, who, while he relates the facts, says he does not believe them? Now, if no such witness ever did exist, ever can exist, why, in the name of all reason, candor and consistency, ask a Christian to produce such witnesses of his faith in the Christian facts? If any simple skeptic there be who has been deluded by an infidel guide into the maze of atheistic absurdity, he will receive this exposition of his delusion with all thankfulness; and as for an apology to the misanthropic genius who plays off such shameless sophistry, we have none to offer for stripping him naked of the disguise by which he would approach and inveigle the heedless and unwary to their eternal ruin.

In the preceding pages we have, indeed, as nearly as is possible in any case whatever, proved the Gospel to be true by the records and confessions of ancient infidels and enemies, who lived some of them in the time of the Apostles, and all of them, except Julian and Porphyry, in the age immediately subsequent to that of the Apostles. May we not go a little farther, and affirm that in no case whatever can there be a more successful effort made, or a nearer approach gained, to prove, from the testimony of unbelieving opponents, the truth and certainty of the opposite side, than is displayed in the facts and documents accumulated on the preceding pages.

True, indeed, according to the philosophy of Christian evidence by which testimony is appreciated amongst Christians, they do not repose confidence or rest their faith on the report of those who discredit their own word. They derive their assurance only from the the testimony of those who were themselves perfectly and infallibly assured that what they reported was true. It is on the testimony of apostles and prophets that all true Christians rest their faith in Christ and the hope of eternal life. In one sentence, Christians seek the best testimony, while infidels prefer the worst. I say the *worst*, for in no court of justice where English men or English law is known; nay, in no court of justice in any land of law, would that testimony be admitted on which infidels place so high a value. In no

government on earth would the testimony of any person be received who, on examination, would affirm that he does not believe any of the facts which he alleges. Christians place no confidence in such witnesses.

There is, however, a species of evidence found in, or clearly deducible from, the reports and concessions of the antagonist ranks of the first infidels. This evidence is sometimes of much value, and greatly corroborates the faith of Christians. Not, indeed, because these opposers disbelieved the facts which they attest, but because they believed the facts and *misrepresented* them. This certainly is a palpable difference. May not a person report a fact and contradict the meaning of it in any branch of literature or philosophy? And why not in the science of all the sciences—religion itself? Such precisely is the case now before us. We have produced another twelve apostles of Christianity, Jews and pagans, who believed the facts which they report, but did not understand them. They received them not from those who could explain them, the original eye and ear witnesses of the Word. True, indeed, some of them lived while the apostles lived, but their infancy was in the old age of the first proclaimers of the Word, and they received their knowledge of the Christian religion as the Unitarian or Calvinist for the most part now receives his knowledge of the opposing theory—by the *ex parte* reports of aliens or enemies. This, added to the force of religious prejudice, accounts for their misconstruction of the whole affair.

Were some monarchial historian in a foreign land to notice these American republics, might he not, for example, state the leading facts, and mention the great hero of the revolution, without understanding the genius of our institutions, or forming a proper estimate of the authors or the events of this wonderful political revolution? Nay, might he not essentially mistake the characters of the founders of these republics, and ascribe to false causes our political and social blessings, while at the same time his passing notice of persons and events might all be in accordance with truth and fact! Such, or in a high degree, are the notices of the Author of Christianity and its facts, found in the writings

of Jews and Greeks—in the books and statutes of Roman historians, philosophers and chiefs.

In every attitude in which this subject can be placed, the notices of the gospel facts found in the preceding extracts, and gleanings from the first and second centuries, are of very great importance, because they assure us that, so far as all history reaches into those times, and so far as ancient events have come down to us, they are all in corroboration of the apostolic testimony. It is no mean tribute to the fidelity and credibility of the authors of the New Testament, that if their work were now extinct, and we thrown upon the records of unbelieving Jews and pagans, we could make out substantially the same narrative of all the leading gospel facts and events found in the New Testament. And still more gratifying, were we compelled to publish in one volume everything found in the first two centuries, when all things were comparatively fresh, touching the Christian institution, we could not find one authenticated fact that would militate against us, or impair the full strength of any one fact or event recorded in the Christian scriptures.

That such a summary can be fairly made out of the works of the authors already quoted, has appeared from the classification found on pages 82 and 83: as well as from the sum of the remains of Celsus, found on pages 106–109. Indeed, if Josephus, Tacitus, Governor Pliny, the Emperors Trajan, Adrian, and Antoninus the Pious, Celsus, Porphyry, Julian the Apostate, be faithfully and candidly examined, to say nothing of the Mishna, the Talmud, Philo, and those of humbler fame, we shall find that—

1. The Jew's religion;

2. The immediate antecedents of the Christian institution;

3. The existence of Jesus Christ, and his extraordinary character and wonderful works;

4. The call and mission of the Galilean fishermen as apostles;

5. The genuineness of the writings collected in the New Testament;

6. The rapid and marvelous progress of the cause; and

7. The excellent character of the Christians, illustrative of the tendencies of the religion—are clearly and amply at-

tested in the very light in which they are set before us in the Christian books.

The following facts contain almost all the New Testament history; and I need not again repeat they are unequivocally quoted or alluded to, as a part of the Christian religion, by the unbelieving witnesses above named who wrote:

1. That the Jews' religion preceded the Christian, is of the highest antiquity, and distinguished by peculiarities the most extraordinary from every other ancient or modern religion.

2. That John the Baptist appeared in Judea, in the reign of Herod the Great, a reformer and a preacher of singular pretensions, of great sanctity of life, and was well received by the people; but was cruelly and unjustly murdered in prison by Herod the Tetrarch.

3. That Jesus, who is called the Messiah, was born in Judea, in the reign of Augustus Cæsar, of a very humble and obscure woman, and amidst a variety of extraordinary circumstances.

4. That he was, while an infant, on account of persecution, carried into Egypt, but was brought back again into the country of his nativity.

5. That there were certain prophetic writings of high antiquity, from which it had been inferred that a very extraordinary personage was to arise in Judea, or in the East, and from thence to carry his conquests over the whole earth.

6. That this person was generally expected all over the East about the time in which the gospel began to be preached.

7. That Jesus, who is called Christ, taught a new and strange doctrine.

8. That by some means he performed certain wonderful and supernatural actions in confirmation of his new doctrine.

9. That he collected disciples in Judea, who, though of humble birth and very low circumstances, became famous through various parts of the Roman Empire, in consequence of the progress of the Christian doctrine.

10. That Jesus Christ was the founder of a new religion, now called the Christian religion.

11. That while Pontius Pilate was governor in Judea, and Tiberius emperor at Rome, he was publicly executed as a criminal.

12. That this new religion was then checked for a while.

13. That, by some strange occurrence not mentioned, it broke out again and progressed with the most astonishing rapidity.

14. That in the days of Tacitus there was in the city of Rome an immense number of Christians.

15. That these Christians were, during the reign of Nero, or about thirty years after the death of Christ, persecuted to death by that emperor.

16. That constancy [called obstinacy by some pagan governors] in maintaining the heavenly and exclusively divine origin of their religion, is the only crime proved against the Christians, as appears from all the records of their enemies, on account of which they suffered death.

17. That in the year 70, or before those who had seen Jesus Christ had all died, Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed by the Romans, and all the tremendous calamities foretold of that time by Moses and Christ were fully visited upon that disobedient and gainsaying people.

18. That the Christians made a confession of their faith, and were baptized, and met at stated times to worship the Lord.

19. That in their stated meetings they bound themselves, by the solemnities of their religion, to abstain from all moral evil, and to practice all moral good.

20. That the communities which they established were well organized, and were under the superintendence of bishops and deacons.

21. That Jews, Gentiles, barbarians, of all castes, and persons of every rank and condition of life, at the risk and sacrifice of the friendship of the world, of property, and of life, embraced this religion and conformed to all its moral and religious requisitions.

These specifications, independent of all that is quoted by Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian, from Old or New Testament, in their proper import and connections, do fully contain all the peculiar elements of the Christian religion, as displayed and enforced on the pages of the New Institution.

These constitute the skeleton of the New Testament. Were we to clothe these bones with the summaries which we have given out of Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian, to which we here again refer the reader, we should have the whole frame of the Christian institution, differing only in color from that found in the Book. The color of these facts and documents consists in the interpretation of them. Of course the twelve apostles of the Messiah interpret them differently from those witnesses whose testimony we have just now heard. The difference of the interpretation, however, all men of sense will admit, affects not the proposition before us, viz: *that the testimony of our apostles is fully sustained in all the leading facts, by all the ancients of the first and second centuries who have at all spoken of, or alluded to, the Christian religion.*

Whether the Christian books, or those of unbelieving Jews and pagans, logically, truly and properly interpret these facts, is not the question now before us; but this much may be said, in passing, that the fact of the unparalleled fall of all the idolatries in pagan Rome, and of all the polytheistic superstitions in those nations where the gospel is now or was anciently promulged, go far to show that the Christian interpretation is much to be preferred to the infidel; inasmuch as it assigns an adequate cause for the marvelous effects which Gibbon, and all other historians, Christian or infidel, political or ecclesiastic, who notice this subject, record as consequent upon the introduction of the gospel. We have heard the infidel but eloquent Gibbon comment on the facts; but his interpretation, like that of his unbelieving predecessors, if not as miraculous, is certainly as marvelous as the facts which both Christians and infidels are constrained to admit.

Without any special pleading on the premises now fully alleged, we are willing to submit the question to the decision of every candid and attentive reader: *whether the testimony of those unbelieving Jews and pagans does, or does not, sustain and corroborate the testimony of the Christian apostles, relative to those facts and events on which the Christian institution rests.* If he decide in the affirmative, he will doubtless interpret the facts as the apostles have done; and seeing that the original witnesses confirmed their testimony by

the sacrifice of their lives, he will find good reason in the excellency of the Gospel, in the purity of its doctrines, in the righteousness of its requisitions, and in the exceeding great and precious promises which it presents, to submit himself to its government, "to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts," "to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world," and to look with joyful anticipations to the coming of the Lord, and "to the inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and unfading," which the Lord, the Saviour and Judge of all, has promised to them that "love his kingdom and his appearing."

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CHRISTIAN

EVIDENCES

BY

JAMES CHALLEN,

AUTHOR OF

"THE GOSPEL AND ITS ELEMENTS."

PHILADELPHIA:

J. CHALLEN & SONS,

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1856, by

JAMES CHALLEN

In the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the United States, in and for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

PREFACE.

THIS work is not professedly controversial, but designed to present to the reader a cumulative argument for the truth of Christianity, from the rational basis on which it is founded—the divine resting on the supernatural; from the nature of its introduction, in harmony with its spiritual attributes; from the tokens of divinity it originally exhibited; from the validity of its claims—the highest that could be demanded; from its early, rapid, and universal spread; from its authoritative summons to hear the voice of God, and to see the arm of Jehovah, as revealed therein. The argument in this book, in favor of the truth and divine origin of Christianity, if not in its conception, certainly in its con-

struction, differs materially from any known to the author. He now offers the work not as a substitute for, but in addition to, others of a more elaborate character, on the same inexhaustible subject. Each successive step in the logical deduction is demanded, in the reading of this book, to realize and feel the force of the conclusions required. Examine it carefully, critically, thoroughly; and weigh every argument fairly; and if in so doing, the doubts of the sceptical shall be solved, the wavering be established, and a profounder interest be awakened in behalf of the claims of Jesus of Nazareth to the homage of mankind, the work shall not have been written in vain.

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CHRISTIAN EVIDENCES.

INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

MANY have sought to find reasons for the early and rapid success of the first teachers of the Christian religion—the original Apostles of Christ—independent of the miracles which attended their mission; but all attempts to set them aside have signally failed. It must be admitted, and the concessions of unbelievers, both ancient and modern, warrant the assumption, that it generally prevailed in the first century of its establishment. The causes which led to this so extraordinary and triumphant success, believers have attributed to its supernatural and divine accompaniments; though various attempts have been made on the part of its enemies to account for it in the absence of these testimonials of its divinity.

It is the object of this work to show that the reasons assigned, on the part of its opposers, are weak and defective, and wholly unworthy of confidence; and that the original ground relied upon, stands to this day invulnerable and unmoved, after all that its worst enemies have said against it.

Some of the grounds of defense we shall offer may not be new or unknown to the intelligent reader; but it will do no harm to refresh his memory with the arguments which others have adduced; and by presenting them in a new form, with the impression they have made on the mind of the author, he may enlist more fully his attention to their serious and earnest consideration.

The reader will find, as is confidently believed, in this work, many trains of thought and logical deductions which will not be found elsewhere, on the premises assumed; and therefore the author cannot but think, that it is his duty to present to the public what he deems to be an unanswerable argument for the truth of Christianity; and in so doing, afford a justifiable reason for adding another work to the many which have been written and published on this subject.

It will be difficult now to find much that is new or original in the main pleadings on this great question. The germs of thought, if not

the same arguments, offered in this work, others may have presented; but he is not aware that the subject, as a whole, in the manner herein considered, has been hitherto elaborated. Of this, however, the public is the best and the safest judge, and to it we make our appeal. There is always more or less vanity in the claims to originality too often set up. We have long since learned that there is nothing absolutely "new under the sun," and that all men have been receivers and givers. The action of the world upon us commences with our birth, and ends only with our death. How little would there be left to any one, legitimately his own, if dispossessed of all that he had received from his predecessors or cotemporaries!

In regard to Christianity, it must be admitted that there were serious and formidable difficulties in the way of its introduction and establishment, and of its general spread, in the early ages of its existence. These were not imaginary, but real and formidable difficulties, enough to abate the zeal and cool the ardor of the boldest and the most enterprising and self-confident; and more than sufficient to deter and dishearten the weak and the irresolute, not to say the wicked and the designing.

Christianity had its origin and arose among a

people thoroughly schooled in every thing connected with the nature, objects, and evidences of a divine institution, or what should legitimately characterize one. The Jewish nation were not only well instructed on this head, but they were the only people who could properly lay any claims to having received one at the hands of God. They professed to have been honored above all other nations with supernatural communications from on high. And the subject had been fully examined, and all its parts inquired into, for the space of fifteen centuries. They were an ancient people, none more so. It was their glory and their boast. None had such an ancestry, none could claim so great antiquity. Israel had existed before the birth of the Assyrian, the Medo-Persian, the Grecian, or the Roman empires. It overlooked as it antedated them all; and during its entire history they had been in possession of the writings of Moses and also the books of the Prophets, the Psalms of David, and the chronicles of their judges and kings. Many are the references found in these writings to the evidences and criteria of a divine commission, with which they were familiar; and after the lapse of three thousand years, nothing can be added to them. No new principles since their date have been conceived or developed by

the wisest or the profoundest minds. They were not only just and reasonable, but superior to any found elsewhere; exhibiting an amount of intelligence and a power of discrimination, which leave nothing for us to demand on all the premises in the consideration of this subject.

In proof of this, we call your attention to the mission of Moses. He was not only conscious of acting under a divine call and commission; but he gave the most abundant evidences of the fact, not only to those in whose behalf he was sent, but also to the nation from whom he sought and obtained their deliverance. We do not now, though we justly might, offer this in proof of his divine mission; but we shall not anticipate our plea, by assuming what in the judgment of the reader ought to be proved. We simply refer to this case to show that he fully understood the nature and evidences of such a commission, and presented the only safe and satisfactory grounds on which it should rest; and that the nation of Israel were fully instructed in regard to every thing which should enter into and accompany such a commission.

Hear then what is said on this subject. "And the Lord said to Moses: See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." "And the Egyptians shall

know that I am the Lord, when I stretch forth mine hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them. And Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded them, so did they." "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying: Show a miracle for you; then thou shalt say unto Aaron, take thy rod and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent. And Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, and they did so as the Lord had commanded; and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh, and before his servants, and it became a serpent."* After this followed the ten plagues, "that the Egyptians might know that I am the Lord when I stretch forth my hand upon Egypt, and bring out the children of Israel from among them." These were the "signs and wonders" in the presence of Pharaoh and of his people, which should give such demonstrations of the presence and interposition of the God of Abraham in behalf of his chosen people. They were open, public, sensible displays of omnipotence, that no one could mistake or misinterpret.

Justly has it been said, that "Moses was either an enthusiast, a dupe, or an impostor. That

* Exod. vii. 1, 5, 8, 9, 10.

he was not an enthusiast, may be argued from his learning—he was versed in all the learning of the Egyptians; from his education among the courtiers of Pharaoh, from the diffidence with which he received the first annunciation of his mission, from the admirable suitableness of his law to the accomplishment of the objects proposed — the knowledge therein displayed of human nature — the connection of laws politically necessary with religion, &c. He could not have been a dupe; for if the appearance in the burning bush had not been real — if he had been deceived in the evidences of his mission — if the miracles wrought to convince him that he was the chosen prophet of God had been only natural phenomena, he could not have inferred from them that he was to be the legislator and deliverer of the Jews. Neither was he an impostor. An impostor would not have chosen to suffer affliction with a degraded race, rather than to indulge in the gayeties and fascinations of a court. An impostor would not have exposed himself to the danger of death by vindicating the cause of the oppressed. He would not, if banished to a desert, be contented with his lot, forget his schemes of ambition, intermarry among the natives of an obscure province, and calmly sink into the condition of a shepherd. Even if

he were at length to rouse from this strange lethargy, and resolve to deliver his countrymen or perish in the attempt, an impostor would have proceeded with some address and policy He would not enter abruptly into the presence of an absolute sovereign, and peremptorily insist on the liberation of a race of useful slaves. Neither would an impostor have committed himself by predicting a series of miraculous judgments if these slaves were not permitted to emigrate. If Moses, too, had been either of these, he could not have conquered armies without fighting; or impressed a whole nation with imaginary terrors; or guided and fed a whole nation for forty years in the wilderness. He would not have compelled, and he could not have persuaded the Egyptians and their king to resign their dominion to the Israelites, unless he had been possessed of powers more than human. That is, he was a true prophet—he wrought miracles—he was the character he professed to be. The mere fact that Moses was not a true prophet, and yet delivered the Israelites, would be a much greater miracle than any he is related to have performed."*

It is evident then, from the references made to the writings of Moses, and by a further appeal

* Horæ Mosaicæ.

to the writings of the prophets, that the nation of Israel had in their hands all the criteria of what should, and of right ought to constitute a divine mission. In regard to this, they not only had the means of obtaining a correct judgment; but by their daily reading and study of the sacred books, they must have been fully acquainted with the subject, and gave assurance of the fact, not only during the different stages of their previous history, but at the time of the Saviour's mission and the ministry of his chosen apostles.

Indeed, so far back as the times of Abraham, the most abundant evidences may be found, that he, the father of the nation, was not ignorant of this question. When the patriarch asked the Lord, "Whereby shall I know that I shall inherit" the land of Canaan, when as yet he had no heir by Sarah his wife, he was commanded to "take a heifer of three years old, and a she-goat three years old, and a ram three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon, and slay and divide them and lay them upon an altar. And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and lo, a horror of great darkness fell upon him; and he said to Abram: Know of a surety, that thy seed shall be a stranger in the land that is not theirs, and shall serve them. And they shall afflict them

four hundred years; and also that nation whom they shall serve, will I judge; and afterward shall they come out with great substance. And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come hither again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full. And it came to pass that when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp, that passed between these pieces. In that same day, the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."*

These separate appearances and mysterious symbols, and the covenant entered into with Abram over the slain and divided animals and birds, were designed to give him the most solemn and certain assurances, not only of his call and commission, but of the design and purpose of the Almighty with reference to his posterity, for thousands of years to come. He therefore could labor under no mistake in regard to the events connected with the revelations made him on this occasion; and under the strong persuasion that what God had promised he was able to perform, he not only believed, but his faith was rendered

* Gen. xv. 8–18.

perfect by his entire obedience to the will of God.

The reader will examine carefully the following scriptures on this head. They will show how God, in a special manner, gave the most satisfactory assurances to all those whom he raised up and commissioned to act in his name; and not only to them, but also to others in whose behalf they acted, and to whom they had been sent.

In the case of Gideon, who was raised up and ordered to redeem Israel out of the hands of the Midianites. He was the least in his father's house, and his family was poor in Manasseh. In order to be assured that God had sent him, he said: "If now I have found grace in thy sight, then show me a sign that thou talkest with me." The sign was given him; he was commanded to "take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon the rock, and pour out the broth, and he did so;" and "the angel of the Lord put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes."*

We refer to the case of Elijah, in the days of Ahab, in the trial of the false prophets.

* Judges vi. 17, 20, 21.

"Let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word; then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt-sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench."*

The recovery also of Hezekiah from sickness, and the adding fifteen years to his life, according to the promise of God. He asked: "What shall be the sign that the Lord will heal me, and that I shall go up into the house of the Lord the third day? And Isaiah said: This sign shalt thou have of the Lord, that the Lord will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees?" He demanded that the shadow should return backward ten degrees, and it did so.†

Many testimonies of a similar kind might be cited; but these will suffice to indicate that the nation of Israel had the fullest instruction, both by precept and example, in reference to the proper signs and credentials which should accompany a divine messenger and his message.

It will further appear that the Jews, in the times of the Messiah, were not unmindful of the lessons thus taught them and their fathers, as

* 1 Kings xviii. 36, 38. † 2 Kings xx. 8, 9, 10.

found in the sacred books of their nation. Thus, when John the Baptist appeared among them, they were struck with wonder at the fact, that he "did no miracle," and yet claimed to be a prophet. But, nevertheless, they acknowledged that all things that he spoke concerning Jesus of Nazareth had been fulfilled.* These things, spoken by the harbinger of Jesus, did not refer to events lying in the distant future, as they would not have been adapted to the ends proposed; but they were fulfilling before their own eyes, and answered all the designs to be effected by miracles of an outward and sensible character. The fulfillment of these predictions were to them as satisfactory, or should have been, as if he had wrought special miracles in proof of his prophetic mission to the nation.

In the memorable interview of Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, with Jesus of Nazareth, he at once recognized his claims as a divine messenger, from the supernatural testimonials he presented. "We know that thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him."† And how often was this demand made at the hands of the Saviour—"What sign showest thou, that we may believe"?

* John x. 41, 42. † Ib. iii. 2.

The effect of the miracles wrought by the Saviour, show that they fully recognized their necessity and understood their use. As an example, we refer to the case of the blind man restored to sight. "How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles?" "If this man were not of God, he could do nothing"*—that is, he could not have opened the eyes of the blind.

Jesus himself, repeatedly appealed to the miracles, wrought openly in the presence of the people, as affording the necessary credentials of a divine messenger. "But I have greater witness than that of John: for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me."† "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you believe not me, believe the works; that we may know and believe that the Father is in me and I in him."‡

It will appear from the facts already referred to, that no people had so much light on all these premises as the Jews; and none were better able to judge of their nature, fitness and design. Our Saviour refused to rely alone either on the testimony of John, or on his own assumptions, as the grounds on which he should be re-

* John ix. 16, 33. † Ib. v. 36. ‡ Ib. x. 37, 38.

ceived as the Messiah of the Jewish nation—the Son of God. But that he uniformly appealed to his miracles, as the proper basis for their confidence in him.

No one ever gave higher honor to the reason and judgment of men than did our Saviour. He refused a blind attachment to his person, and an ignorant acknowledgment of his claims. He demanded no stronger faith in his mission than the credentials furnished would justify; and in their absence, or inability to form an intelligent judgment of their nature, no one was held responsible for his unbelief. Indeed, Christianity is a question of fact; and must be examined and proved, as all such questions should be, by testimonies in harmony with the facts themselves. It has to do, not with a theory, or an intellectual system, whether of morals or philosophy; not merely with a divine institution, but chiefly with a person; not primarily with the religion taught, but with the author of it; and therefore it commences not with a system, but with him who taught it.

Before his religion could be received, his own claims as "The Messiah—The Son of God," must be firmly established; and this was done by the works, supernatural and divine, which he wrought. The whole subject, both in regard to the Author

of Christianity and the system he developed, is addressed to our faith, and demands a rational and divine basis to rest upon; and what more satisfactory than the signs and wonders which accompanied its introduction?

It will appear that several significant names have been appropriated to the miracles recorded in the New Testament; and the wisdom of this arrangement will be seen by looking at the following considerations. No one word, indeed, could adequately express all that is represented by these separate acts. Like all great events, springing from the same cause, they present many sides, and must be contemplated from a variety of angles, according as they may strike the observation of the beholders.

It was not simply to avoid tautology, or from a refined and fastidious taste, of a mere verbal character, that the writers of the New Testament employ sometimes one and again several words, often in the same sentence, to express the general idea to the popular mind of what, in fact, constitutes a miracle. But there were reasons, growing out of the nature of the several distinct acts, under this head of miracles, that made the use of these specific words necessary.

They are called sometimes "wonders," and again "signs"—"powers"—"works." To take

the first, viz. "wonders." In this the effect produced on the mind of the beholder is transferred to the work itself which produced it; an effect often graphically portrayed by the Evangelists, when giving an account of the miracles of the Redeemer. As an evidence of this effect, we refer to the healing of the paralytic. "And immediately he arose, took up his bed, and went forth before them all: insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it in this fashion."*

This miracle was to those who beheld it a "wonder"—a marvel. Not because it was greater than any other of the Saviour's miracles, but the like of this they had never before seen. The miracle on the Sea of Galilee, in stilling the tempest, belongs to this class, as is evident from the effect produced on the minds of the disciples: "And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"† Christ walking on the sea and calming the tempest, when the disciples were threatened with shipwreck, also must be thus classified: "And they were sore amazed in themselves beyond measure, and wondered."‡

It will be seen that this word does not fully

* Mark ii. 12. † Ib. iv. 41. ‡ Ib. vi. 51.

express what is meant by a miracle. It touches the matter only at a distance—merely on the surface. There are many things that excite "wonder," both in Nature and in Art, which belong not to the domain of miracles. The ethical meaning of the miracle would be wholly lost, were blank astonishment, or gaping wonder, all that had been aroused by it, inasmuch as this effect may be produced in a thousand ways, independent of supernatural causes. It is not a little remarkable, rather it is singularly characteristic of the miracles of the New Testament, that this name "wonders" is never applied to them, but in connection with other names. They are generally called "signs and wonders;"—"signs" and "powers" alone; but never "wonders" alone. It is not that the miracle, considered simply as a "wonder," which the astonished beholder can reduce to no law with which he is acquainted, is even as such, not without its special meaning and purpose — that purpose being that it should startle the beholder from the mere dream of sense, by which he may be earth-bound to the visible and the material. And even though the "wonder" may not in itself be considered, as it really was, an appeal from on high to what was spiritual in man, it should nevertheless be regarded as a trumpet blast, heralding the King

of the spiritual empire; and as a summons from him to "Hear, oh earth!" the words he should speak; and to open their eyes to the spiritual appeal he was about to address them. It is not surprising that he who was called "The Wonderful" should himself do "wonders"—the greater astonishment would be if he did not. It is God alone who does "wonderful things." And was not the Messiah "God manifest in the flesh?"

But the miracle, besides being a "wonder," was also a "sign"—a token of the near presence and manifest working of the God of creation. In this word, the ethical end and purpose of the miracle appears most prominently, as in "wonders" the least. They are "signs" and pledges of something superior to and beyond themselves, just as the lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night, were for "signs" and for seasons, for days and years," indicated the power of God, who said, "Let there be light: and there was light." "Ask thou a 'sign' of the Lord thy God: ask it either in the depth, or in the height above."* Whatever that sign may be, it was a "sign from the Lord." The "signs" done were not so valuable for what they were in themselves, as for what they indicated of the

* Isaiah vii. 11.

presence of God, and of the grace and mercy which were now at hand. They were the burnished links of that chain that bound once more heaven with earth. They were the constellated stars, which shine so gloriously in the spiritual universe, and were now brought within the earthly vision of man. They were a banner hung up on high, not merely of "strange device," but of heavenly garniture, attracting all eyes, and summoning all hearts to enlist under it—the banner of the Lord of Hosts, covered over with heraldry divine. These "signs" were from heaven, and gave indication of a higher, spiritual world beyond us, to which humanity was called upon to look. They were the unmistakable seals of a heavenly commission, that it was death and perdition not to honor and revere. The apostles in their mission to the world, had these "signs" conferred upon them. "And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with and confirming the word with 'signs' following."*

The word is frequently used in senses such as these: "What sign showest thou?" "We would see a sign from thee." "Show us a sign from heaven." These requests were made when the Jews demanded of the Lord, to justify the

* Mark xvi. 20; Acts xiv. 3; Heb. ii. 4.

claims which he urged, or the things which he did in their presence, to show the special authority under which he acted; and Paul speaks of himself as having the "signs of an apostle,"* or the tokens which should be presented by one who acted under so high a commission.

Frequently also the miracles are styled "powers," or "mighty works," which alone could be performed by God. As in the term "wonders," the effect gives the name to the cause which produced it; so the name "powers," as the cause, gives its name to the effect of the miracle. The "power" belongs to God, but has been transferred to the messenger he has sent, and by which he has been divinely equipped. "And Stephen, being full of faith and 'power,' did 'great wonders' and miracles among the people." "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with 'power.'"†

These three terms, as applied to the miracles recorded in the New Testament, occur several times together. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as you yourselves know." "Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you

* 2 Cor. xii. 12. † Acts vi. 8; x. 38.

in all patience in signs and wonders and mighty deeds." *

Whatever then may be their name, the miracles are all descriptive of the same works, and indicate the presence of the same omnipotent hand. An example of one of our Saviour's miracles shows how it may be, at one and the same time, all these. In the healing of the paralytic, to which already we have referred, it was regarded by the beholders as a "wonder;" for they were all amazed.† It was also a "power;" for the healed man, at the bidding of Christ, "arose, took up his bed and walked;" and it was also a "sign," for it gave token that one greater than man was found present among them. It stood in connection with a higher fact, of which it was both a sign and seal, viz., that "the Son of Man had authority on the earth to forgive sins"—a prerogative alone belonging to God. This miracle of wonder and of power, was a visible sign, to all present, that he who wrought it had authority to forgive sins, even in his lowest and humblest state, while appearing only to be "the Son of Man."

A further term by which John the Apostle, frequently names the miracles of Christ, is strikingly significant. With him they are simply

* Rom. xv. 19. † Mark ii. 1–12.

"works." For the "works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me." "Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel." "Many good works have I showed you from my Father; for which of those works do you stone me?"* Thus the wonderful in the pages of John, who was so deeply penetrated with the ethical nature of the miracles of Christ, —the wonderful is only the natural form of "working" for Him who is "God manifest in the flesh;" in whom all the fullness of divinity substantially dwells. He must, by the necessity of his nature, not simply by his office, bring forth "works" greater than man's. They are but "the outermost circle of which he is the centre." Having admitted the great doctrine of the Incarnation of the Word, all else, however wonderful, follows as a matter of course. These miracles are but a portion of the fruit, after its kind, which the tree of life brings forth; and may, with a deep significance, be styled "works of Christ," with no further addition or explanation. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." And as an artist is known by his works, so Jesus

* John x. 32; vii. 21; x. 25, 32. Ibid xiv. 11. 12; xv. 24.

was known by his. They were just the natural outgrowth of his divine nature; and wonderful as they are to us, they were not wonderful to him. Our faith should not stumble in the presence of Him who made all things by the word of his power; and who, if they were reduced to nothing, could reproduce them by the same creative word. A man is always greater than his works. The products of genius are never equal to the mind that wrought them; and we always feel, that great as they are, they bear no proportion to what the same mind, under other circumstances, is capable of doing. Marvelous as were the "works" wrought by the Messiah, they were done by Him who divested himself of the glory he had with the Father before the world was. Though God, he did not affect so much to appear in divine majesty, as to hide in human form "the thunder of his power." It was not how much of divinity he could put forth; but how little, to accomplish the great ends of his mission. He even promised the apostles to enable them to do greater works than his own.

Let us not then be startled from our faith by the signs and wonders, powers and mighty works, done by the Saviour, as though they were impossibilities; or, on the other hand, deem that

they were too great to demonstrate the truth of that system which had its origin in the infinite love of God to our fallen race. A love whose length and breadth and depth and height, so far surpassing human comprehension, may well seek new and ocean-like currents to flow in. A love that conquers all things may well seek to conquer the stubbornness of our unbelief, by the might and marvels which reveal it to man. He who gave—that greatest of all miracles—his Son, as an offering for sin, may well attest his mission and his work by attaching to it the broad seal of his empire. Shall we refuse an inheritance by will, because of the strange device impressed upon its seal? Shall we refuse a kingdom, because its prince affords us the only proof of his authority to bestow the gift, which should satisfy us both of his willingness and ability? Rather, shall we not the more readily accept the proffered favor from the channel in which it flows, and the tokens by which it is accompanied

MIRACLES.—THEIR NECESSITY AND DESIGN.

That Christianity was introduced and permanently established by miracles, is an admitted fact, by all who believe that Jesus of Nazareth was the true Messiah—the son of the living God. Those who deny the truth of his pretensions, and call in question his Divine commission and authority, deny this, and attempt to account for the origin and spread of the Gospel on other grounds. It is proper and just that they should be heard, and their theories candidly examined and considered. Christianity is either a false or a true system, and should be subjected to all the known and recognized tests that the nature of its claims justly demand. Its advocates and friends have never hesitated or been reluctant to hear all that may be urged against it, and candidly to consider the objections of unbelievers, whatever may be, their nature or character. They only ask that the law of evidence which should obtain in all questions of fact, shall be rigidly applied to it, and they are willing to abide the decision. They object, as of right, to the use and application of new and unwarrantable rules of evidence,

such as no competent tribunal would admit or entertain in the premises; but will hear and consider all that may be urged in opposition to its claims in harmony with the nature of the testimony on which it rests. Its friends set up no rules of evidence, but such as would be admitted in any court, competent to examine into questions of fact. They ask for no special commission, to inquire into the nature of its evidences. They seek for no extra-judicial proceedings to establish the truth of its pretensions. They are ready and willing to apply all the tests, and to examine all the reasonings which legitimately and of right belong to it, and are confident of the final results, in favor of its Divine origin.

Christianity lays no claims to be a system of ethical philosophy, the principles of which are discovered by the unassisted powers of the human mind, and which are liable to imperfection and error. This is a subject on which men may forever speculate, and in regard to which all may form an independent judgment, false or true. The reasonings on moral science call for the nicest distinctions in the use of words; and the least deviation from established rules, involves the whole subject in endless contradictions and dispute. Such, indeed, is the poverty of human language, that to the present time, no words can

be found sufficiently definite and precise to afford a permanent nomenclature, intelligible to all parties. Moral science, the precepts of which contemplate the proper understanding of all that is comprehended in the boundaries between right and wrong; the laws of emotion and sensibility, of pain and pleasure, of hatred and love, of desire and aversion, never have been satisfactorily adjusted, and the subject is still open for discussion, and will be in all future time.

Whilst Christianity contains in it a system of morals, to regulate the hearts and the lives of those who adopt it, and whilst its believers recognize in it the only true system known to man, and are willing to compare it with all other systems of human origin; they do not so much rely upon it as proof of the divine origin of the gospel, as they do to challenge the attention and respect of the world, to the clear embodiment of a system infinitely purer and larger than any that preceded it, and which has anticipated all that has followed its introduction into the world. That such a system of moral teaching should have originated with Jesus of Nazareth, and in such an age, and among such a people, they justly regard as a phenomenon unprecedented in the history of the world. It is known that the manners and morals of the Gentile world were

sunk in the lowest depths of corruption, and the wisest of their philosophers and sages apprehended the most terrible judgments on the race, without aid from on high. And the state of public morals in Judea was just as bad as among the more ignorant pagans; in addition to which the cherished pride and intolerance of the Jewish nation exceeded all others. The teachings of the Nazarene were continually arousing the prejudices of his own people, and in many respects were antagonistic to the prevailing spirit and manners which everywhere abounded. Besides, there was no part of the land in a more debased condition than that of Galilee, and no village in that land of darkness more corrupt than Nazareth, in which for thirty years he resided. His very name—the Nazarene, became a byword and reproach; and the question, familiarly known as a proverb—"Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" met with its answer in the person of Jesus, the best man that ever lived, and in the system of morality, the best that ever was taught. Not only then has a good thing come out of this degraded and polluted village, but the best thing the world has ever seen. Jesus, the son of the carpenter—the son of Mary—the resident for thirty years in an obscure and debased village, untaught, unknown, inexperienced and unbe-

friended, has given the world a system of moral science that would have rendered Plato immortal, and placed Socrates among the gods. The world, for nearly two thousand years, has had but one teacher of morals, and will never have another;—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of an humble artizan, who received nothing from the age which gave him birth, or the world that rejected him, but who, like the sun, has illumined all ages, and poured the light of his divine morality on all classes and conditions of our race.

But, whilst we thus affirm our judgment in regard to the structure of the Christian system, so far as its morality is concerned, and believe that it affords *prima facie* evidence of a divine origin, yet, primarily, the miraculous proof first exhibited on the part of its author is the main pillar on which it rests, and by which its truth must be sustained and defended. The august temple of argument in behalf of the divinity of the gospel, rests upon a supernatural basis, and must either stand or fall, according to the strength or the feebleness with which its foundation, as thus considered, can be demonstrated. This is the highest ground that can be assumed in the premises, and is all that its ablest adversaries may ask. A thousand minor questions donbtless

may be taken into the account in the discussion of the great subject of Christian evidence, and it is proper and right for the Christian to claim all that legitimately belongs to him, for his labor is affirmative. He assumes the ground that Christianity is a question of fact, and everything that bears upon it he is at liberty to hear, and should not ignore any branch of the argument. But to narrow down the points at issue, we are willing to take the ground that Christianity originated in miracles, and therefore is divine. So Jesus reasoned, "If I do not the works of God, don't believe me:" and so Paul affirmed, "If Christ be not risen, then is your faith vain, and you are yet in your sins, and the apostles are false witnesses."

We suppose that this is the fairest, fullest issue that can be made. Upon it turns the truth or falsity of the Christian system. It was here the first battle was fought and the first victories achieved, and here we are ready and willing to meet the question now and in all coming time.

We are aware that infidelity begins with a negation. Its highest province is to deny; and this any one can do. It states with Hume, that a miracle is impossible. That the fact of a miracle, requires greater evidence for its demonstration than the senses even of him who has

witnessed it. No sophism can be more absurd than this. The hidden agency by which a sick man is instantly restored to health, a blind man to sight, and a dumb man to speech, or a dead man to life, may not and is not cognizable by the senses, but the phenomena are. The man who was sick, or blind, or deaf, or dead, is an object of sense, and the conditions of sickness, and disability, and death are all subjects which come under the purview of the senses, and the instantaneous changes wrought upon the person or persons in these several conditions, are alike the proper objects of sense; and therefore human testimony is as safe to be trusted here, as in any of the ordinary and natural events of life.

We know as little of the secret virtue of medicine to restore the sick, or the hidden virtue of food to sustain the life, or the tremendous forces of nature to evolve and mature the growth of the vegetable and animal kingdoms; but the facts themselves are all cognizable by the senses. And we might as reasonably deny the one as the other. The results of the supernatural are all natural. The effect of the miraculous in the cases referred to are all human. The man was sick—but instantly is made well. The blind is restored to sight, the dumb speak, the dead are brought to life. These latter are but the normal

conditions of the persons spoken of. Let it then be remembered that whilst the hidden and mysterious powers which wrought these wonders were concealed from the sight, the effects were visible, and as much the subject of human testimony as any facts of an ordinary character which address our outward senses.

The foundation of Christianity is not a mystery merely, but a mystery revealed. Not an infinite and invisible agency, unappreciable by the senses, but the "Incarnate Word which dwelt among us, whose glory," in all the signs and wonders he wrought, "we have beheld, the glory of the only begotten of the Father—full of grace and truth."

Christianity is not a theory—a philosophical system, a Jewish fable; but an incomparable and glorious fact—mysterious in the power which gave it birth and rendered it credible, but having a human side upon it which brings it perfectly within the field of earthly vision. Its divine and supernatural accompaniments were alike demanded, as a scheme of moral providence, to prepare the mind for its reception, and to separate it from all the gross and debasing mythologies of the pagan world and the false and corrupt systems of the race. Its very structure, in harmony with its solemn purposes and lofty

aims, required a demonstration which would silence all objections, and command the intelligent belief of its heavenly origin. Without this, it would only have compared with the prevailing systems of the world as a moral science; and though it might and would have carried away all preference and silenced all competition, it would have failed in the first instance to have met with a ready introduction and a permanent establishment on the earth. So far then as miracles are concerned, they are in harmony with the religion they were designed to demonstrate. They were natural and necessary, instead of being strange and anomalous. They were the silver lining of the cloud of mercy, which revealed to the eye the sun that was behind it. They were the fit accompaniments of a person whose abode was heaven. The proper sign-manual and seals of Heaven's only ambassador on earth. And as in human governments, so in the divine, the ruling sovereign may be at liberty to choose his own way of attesting the claims of the highest functionaries sent to foreign powers. "What sign showest thou, that we may believe?" was both the dictate of reason and of custom. "If I do not the works of God, believe me not," was the only reply demanded in the case. These, said the Teacher from Heaven, these are my cre-

dentials. These are the proofs of my high commission, the seals of my authority.

The miracles of Jesus were not mere miracles of power. They were not divine acts only, but divine attestations,—and still farther, they were the mysterious symbols, the written lessons of the incarnate God, speaking in wisdom and mercy, and love to man.

Infidels have said, as though there was any soundness in the reasoning, "Admit that Jesus fed five thousand persons on one occasion miraculously, with a few loaves and fishes; but God every day supplies the wants of innumerable myriads. Jesus is said to have given eyesight to the blind, and even life to the dead; but sensation and vitality are the daily gifts of God to the world, in cases beyond reckoning. Which is the greater wonder? and what wisdom can there be in placing a lesser miracle before those who will not be moved by the greater miracle?"

But in reply we say, that it is not a question, whether more of God is seen in the ordinary operations of nature, or the occasional intervention as exhibited in a miracle. The one is simply equal to the other, but differing in the degree. The true question is, whether men will be more sensibly impressed by a sudden and immediate display of Omnipotence as seen in a miracle,

than by the ordinary operation of those laws with which we are familiar. If we had been present when God said "Let there be light, and light was;" and when he spoke all things out of nothing, would not the impression of his presence and his agency have been deeper than at any subsequent period, when we saw the sun rise according to his fixed and unalterable purpose, or looked upon the varied and successive processes which daily appear before us in the system of the universe, to which he has given birth.

Take, for example, the developments of the modern system of Spiritualism. We affirm nothing in regard to the pretensions of this system, but admitting, for the sake of argument, all that its advocates claim, why is it now that Robert Owen, the great champion of infidelity, and the no less deluded skeptic of our own city, Professor R. Hare, are both believers in a spiritual world, in the separate existence of spirits, and of the immortality of the soul? A spiritual universe existed before they believed in it, and souls were an entity and immortal, in despite of their former unbelief. But why believe it now? simply because special and sensible evidence has been furnished them. The spirits so long silent have spoken, and startled them from their slumbers; a single rap underneath a table, a tip of

an oaken board, a sound like the click of a watch, or an instrument moved by no law hitherto known, pointing to the alphabet, have upset all their unbelief, and converted them to the faith they once despised and rejected. Is it not the unexpectedness of these strange visitations—the preternatural appearance of these "familiar spirits," that "peep and mutter," that have brought the unlooked for change? And now these men can deny the force of evidence and the necessity for the miracles of Christ, designed as they were to demonstrate the truth of a spiritual system, and to attest the claims of him who is Lord of that system. Strange inconsistency! Why did not the laws of nature, the powers of the human soul, its heavenward aspirations, its conscience, memory, hopes, and fears,—why did not Plato convert them to the doctrine of man's immortality, and to the belief in another world of conscious being after death? They believe now, according to Straus and other infidels, on the lesser evidence that nature in its ordinary operations afforded them.

The concessions of spiritualism for the necessity of such direct and sensible proofs of the separate and conscious existence of immortal spirits, is an argument in favor of the necessity for miracles to attest the incomparably higher

claims of Christianity upon the attention of man. And if anomalous spirits, good and bad, real or imaginary, can command the belief of these hoary skeptics in a spiritual system, surely the healing of the sick, the giving eyesight to the blind, and feet to the lame, and life to the dead —the calling back "the spirits" to reanimate the once lifeless corpse—the expelling legions of "demons" from those who, like them, are possessed of them; these and similar exhibitions of divine power, are more in harmony with the nature of the author of this system, and the system itself, than the old, stale, jejune, madcap sorceries either of ancient or modern times.

Among all the phenomena, pretended or real, yet seen or reported, none of them are beyond the power or the agency of some conditions of created intelligences. They are earthly, animal, or demoniac. They reach no higher stand-point than may be predicated of "spirits"—angelic or human. They never can be dignified by the name of miracle. They may be extraordinary and uncommon, but they are neither preternatural nor supernatural. They never can be called divine. They are as far beneath the "signs and wonders" performed by Jesus of Nazareth, as Hades is below Heaven, as the creature is below the Creator, as the spirits of the dead are below

the Spirit of the living God. "Can a demon give sight to the blind?"

These men are mad with rage because of the skepticism of the world in regard to the records they have given of these special visitations from the spirit-world,—they wonder at the ignorant unbelief and strange perversity of mind. which fails to receive their statements as credible, and yet they close their eyes, and harden their hearts, and refuse belief, amidst all the array of evidence from prophecy and miracle which attest the truth of Messiah's claims, as recorded in the writings of those who testified to what they saw and heard and handled of the living word, and sealed their testimony with their blood: after having wrought similar miracles with their Lord, during their own personal ministry.

But it may be objected, that, to unbelievers, spiritualists can now show the sensible proofs of spirit-existence, and invite them to come and see for themselves and be convinced. Well, so could the apostles, and so they did, to vindicate the truth of Christianity.

But it is again objected, these miracles of the Apostles have ceased, and now are matters of history. Well, so may the marvels of spiritualism cease, and in a few years may become also matters of history, as in ages past. But if real

now, the record of them, if faithful to the facts in the case, will remain so, in all future time, and will be as credible as the demonstrations are to eyewitnesses; for testimony, on record, is just as true as testimony of an eyewitness, if true at all.

But again, it is urged, why did not the miracles continue down to our own age, and afford us the same opportunity for believing that the cotemporaries of Christ and the Apostles had? We reply, why did not the primal creations of God continue through all successive ages? And why did they cease after the system of nature was completed? Why not make a new sun every morning, and a new moon every night? Why not make every man by an act of creation out of the dust of the earth, and every woman out of the side and rib of her chosen husband? Besides, if nature is not sufficient to reveal to us its Maker; if the ordinary operations of the laws of matter and of mind fail to teach man the fact of a spiritual system, but "spirits" must come, especially now, from the invisible world, to make known the facts; why object to the speciality of miracles? How much better would the world be or have been, if the supernatural in religion had become the natural, or the extraordinary should become as common as seed-

time and harvest, day and night, summer and winter?

If miracles should become the rule and the ordinary laws of nature the exception, would not the mind accommodate itself to it, and in the course of ages believe that to be natural which was supernatural, and that to be miraculous which was only in accordance with the laws which God had originally ordained? God could have as easily made the world on this plan as to have given it the laws which now exist. But what better would it have been for the race? Would infidelity have yielded to the force of testimony then, more easily and readily than now? Would it not have been just as liable to objection as the present established laws which govern the physical system? Who is more persuaded of the truth of the existence of an all-wise Creator for the theory in astronomy, that the hand of the Deity is still at work in the distant parts of the universe, in the creation of new worlds, than in the belief that the universe was created in ages past by the Almighty power? And who would the sooner yield his prejudices, and believe in the mission of Christ, if a series of miracles had continued down to the present era, for two thousand years? And what virtue would there be in a faith which resulted from

necessity rather than choice, from force rather than testimony, from sense rather than intelligence? "Because you see me, you believe!" said Jesus, to the doubting Thomas; "happy they, who having never seen, nevertheless believe."

The recorded testimony of the miracles which attested the truth of the Messiah's mission, and our reliance upon that testimony for all our confidence in the truth of his pretensions, is perfectly analogous with the system of nature, and our belief in him who created and still governs and controls it.

It was by a direct exhibition of God's power; it was an act or a series of acts of Omnipotence, that brought into existence the heavens and the earth and all that they contain. But since these acts were completed, the universe has moved on in accordance with the laws which he originally ordained. His hand has never, in nature, and for her, been again put forth; nor has his omnific voice been heard sending forth into space other worlds, as new and additional appendages of this established system. He spoke—He spoke once, and it was done, and the heavens and the earth not only were created, but remain. So, in the introduction of the Gospel, and so also in the Law on Mount Sinai, he made bare his arm—He visibly displayed his power,

and when they were firmly established, miracles ceased, because they were not needed. And as the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork; so, Christianity bears alike all the evidences of a divine system, and equally with nature challenges our belief and commands our reverence and homage for its Author.

THE INTRODUCTION OF CHRISTIANITY.

That Christianity was established permanently on the earth, and was rapidly propagated throughout the Roman world, are facts fully attested by history, sacred and profane. We will show the reasons for it, and from these deduce an argument for its truth and divinity. We ask an impartial consideration of the facts we shall offer, and the conclusions to which they naturally lead.

How it was possible to introduce such a religion, even among the Jews, is indeed a wonder and a marvel, except upon the admission of its supernatural origin and evidence. The structure and genius, the letter and spirit of Christianity, in all respects, differ from the Mosaic Institutions; and chiefly do they stand opposed to the manners, customs, and religious usages which prevailed in the times of the Messiah. No system of religion, however pure and excellent, unattended by supernatural evidence, could have been received by them or produced the effect ascribed to it under the ministry of Christ and his Apostles. No propositions, however clearly

stated, no force of reasoning, however logical and true, could have broken down the cherished prejudices of such a people, and have produced the results ascribed to it, without the aid of those supernal powers which attended its announcement. The Jews boasted of a noble ancestry; they had Abraham for their father; they were in possession of a politico-religious institution which began in miracle at Mount Sinai, and was heralded by the signs and wonders in Egypt, the redemption from the house of bondage, the crossing of the Red Sea, and all the cherished remembrances connected with these sublime events. They had a long list of prophets and kings, whose productions were unrivaled, and whose deeds had been the wonder of the world. "To them pertained the glory and the covenants, the giving of the law and the promises; of whom were the fathers, and from whom the Messiah was to descend, who is God over all blessed forever." No nation ever had such an ancestry; none such monuments of their greatness; none so fond of home and country; none so patriotic and proud; and none have ever held to their religion through all the changes which have passed over them, for more than three thousand years, as the Jewish nation. They stand now, the wonder of the world—the pillar of cloud, still pass-

ing silently along the desert, illumined by the light which gleamed from Sinai, and rendered glorious by the prophetic fires lit by their heaven-inspired prophets. This nation is the mythic Salathiel, living through all the ages of the past, surviving the great monarchies which lay across its pathway, and trampled them in the dust, but from which they have arisen a mighty army, as in the vision of Ezekiel, in the valley of dry bones. Now, that such a nation as this should have, for a moment, listened to a teacher like Jesus of Nazareth, and been impressed with the truth and grandeur of his mission, apart from the sensible proofs of his divine commission, is incredible. That his mission should have commenced and ended among his countrymen, "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," evinces the sincerity and honesty of his convictions, the boldness and courage with which he publicly maintained them, and the desire of affording them the opportunity of embracing the doctrine which he taught, or of openly and publicly refuting it. He did nothing in secret. He taught publicly in their synagogues and temples. He visited their towns and cities, and opened the seals of his commission, and taught them the doctrine of his approaching reign. Like all ambassadors, sent to foreign climes,

he not only presented his letters of authority, signed and sealed in the wonders which he wrought, and to which he appealed; but he never transcended the territorial limits of the nation to which he was sent. He was a minister of the circumcision. Though his religion was for the world, he was not in person sent but to the Jews. They alone of all the nations had the original writings of Moses and the Prophets in their hands, which had predicted his coming; and were the only competent people to examine into the nature of his claims as a divine messenger. That they admitted his works and acknowledged his miracles are matters of history. And that they rejected him and put him to death without reason and against all the rules of justice and right, are equally certain; and that these events in all their minutiæ are in fulfillment of the prophecies held in their hands, no one can deny. And that his own predictions respecting not only his resurrection and triumph, but the fortunes of the ungodly race which crucified him, have been faithfully and fully accomplished, we as confidently affirm. They stand interwoven with the history of the world for nearly two thousand years—the annihilation of which would send us back into the barbarism of the pagans, and blot out the records of twenty

centuries. Surely infidelity has a most difficult task! We know not which most to be shocked at, its ignorance or its impiety—its blindness or infatuation. It has had the courage to present to us the difficulties of our faith in the Christian system, and we have thankfully received, and fully met them in the pulpit and by the press. Let them look at the difficulties of Infidelity, and be abashed and forever silenced. We confess our pity—our indignation, if not our scorn—for the banded groups of ignorant, unlettered boys, of vain, self-conceited, and arrogant pretenders, old or young—of woman's rights men! of socialists and spiritualists, of free-love sensualists, and of all who have made a covenant with death and hades, to oppose and abuse, to vilify and reproach all that is sacred in the faith of a nation, all that is sublime and triumphant in the hopes of the world. That men whom Job would not have set with "the dogs of his flock —who cut mallows by the bushes, and juniper roots for their meat"—that such men should deride the faith of apostles and prophets, the faith of Newton and of Locke, the faith of Webster and of Clay, the faith of the civilized world, and the faith that wrought its civilization and preserves it, is treason against humanity, and rebellion, both against reason, as

well as religion. Such are the men who invite us to hear their stale and thousand times repeated "old wives' fables," against the truth of Christianity. Such are the men who insult our faith by their pictorial representations of what we deem sacred and holy, but which they would profane and render contemptible, by their ungodly ribaldry. Such are the men who publicly celebrate the birth-day of the debased, the drunken, the loathsome defamer of the Old and New Testaments; men who ought, for the same reason, celebrate the birth-day of Herod, who slew "the Innocents;" of Nero, who burnt the Christians, and of Diocletian, who persecuted them to the death. Men, who if they knew the day of the first apostacy of him who is called "*Ho Satanas,*" would gladly celebrate it with all due honors, and hold it ever afterward as the brightest and best of all the calendar.

But we proceed with our argument. Christianity was true, and will be true, apart from all the extraordinary appendages by which it was attended; just as any other system founded on the eternal principles of righteousness is true, independent of the evidence which may render it credible. But as the human mind will not accept of facts without testimony, nor propositions without argument; so the teachings of Christ,

and the claims of his person as the Son of God would not have been received in the absence of those signs and wonders which confirmed his mission. What we affirm in regard to the truth of Christianity, independent of these divine attestations, is also true in regard to all the events of history, ancient and modern; and of the principles of astronomy and chemistry, and of the exact sciences. That Brutus killed Julius Cæsar, and that Augustus was Emperor of Rome; that the sun is the centre of the solar system, and the earth performs its diurnal and annual revolutions; that the diamond is but refined charcoal, and that the angles in a triangle are equal to two right angles; and that things equal to the same thing are equal to one another, are all true, independent of all testimony, and of all reasoning and demonstration. But to give them credibility and currency, these are needed. So in the introduction of a religion intended to displace and forever abolish all others, it was demanded that the evidences for its truth should not only correspond with its divinity, but be both sensible and unexceptionable. And such, indeed, has been the fact in regard to Christianity.

The very conception of such a logical basis for Christianity to rest upon, evinces the wisdom and foresight of its Author, and should not only

shield him from contempt, but render him an object of reverence and homage to mankind. If Lord Bacon has won the proud eminence of being the prince of philosophers for his system of induction, to be applied to all questions within the bounds of human knowledge or research—Jesus of Nazareth first applied the principles which the philosopher taught, in the great induction he has offered to the world, in behalf of his divinity. If the one is the Prince of Philosophers, the other is "the witness for the truth," and "the Prince of Life."

We are aware that many arrive at the conviction of the truth of Christianity from its internal evidence; from the purity of its principle, the excellency of its precepts, the beauty and harmony of its morality, and the stainless, perfect life of its Author. To such, the structure of the system affords as strong evidences of its divine origin, as if now personally attended by "signs and wonders" from on high. But it must be confessed that these persons are exceptions to the general rule, and are only to be found among those, who have not only leisure and taste, but all necessary qualifications for its proper examination. Lord Bacon dedicated his great work to posterity, believing that the age in which he lived was incompetent to appreciate its princi-

ples and yield a hearty assent to their truth. He did not err in his judgment in regard to the verdict. It has been rendered, and he stands redeemed from the charge of wantonness and pedantry, which an ignorant and prejudiced age pronounced upon him. Jesus of Nazareth dedicated his work to all coming time, and the award is certain and eternal.

The works of John Milton and John Bunyan had no fit audience in the times which gave them birth; but they have inherited the fame which was due them, and will hold it in all coming time. Now the principles of the Baconian system were as true in the age in which they originated, as they are now; and the works of Milton and Bunyan were just as worthy of praise then as now; but superior intelligence, and a more careful inquiry into their nature, have furnished the "internal evidences" of their worth. Had these works been heralded by miracles, (though as mere human productions they were not worthy of such attestations), they might have summoned immediate attention to them, but they would have added nothing to the truth of their principles, or the unmistakable proofs of genius they possess.

Christianity is in the world. It is the religion of the only enlightened and best portions of the

world. It is daily increasing in the number of its friends, and exhibits no signs of weakness or infirmity. It has anticipated the verdict of posterity, and its eternal principles of truth are prophetic of its final triumphs. Like the sun going forth from his chambers, it rejoices in the greatness of its strength, and feels no weariness or exhaustion, for the labor of centuries. Not only is Christianity in the world, but it has been in it for five hundred, a thousand, for nearly two thousand years. It originated in the days of Augustus Cæsar, and has seen his mighty empire totter and fall. It has looked down upon all the changes of earth, the rise and greatness, the decay and fall, of states and kingdoms, and the discovery of new worlds, during this long period, and it still remains. No discoveries in science, no records of antiquity, have disturbed its foundation. The heavens have been traversed, and the stars in their courses have been summoned to give testimony against it. The earth has been tortured, the hills have been tossed, and the craters of volcanos have been examined, to yield up some evidences of its imposture. The seas have been crossed, and their depths been fathomed, to see if some proofs could not be afforded of the falsity of its pretensions. But in vain. Science and art say of her, "You are our

sister, our empress queen; and we bow down and give you homage. We are of the same family, but the inheritance is yours." Christianity is a matter of history, and its existence can be proved from the day of its birth down to the present era; not only from its own records, but from independent sources. How, then, did it originate, and what were the causes of its rapid spread in the early ages of its history? We affirm that its supernatural demonstrations can alone account either for its introduction or its spread. We are aware that skeptics object, that the miracles form a part of the records of the Christian religion; that they deny the authenticity of these records, and deem them unworthy of confidence. "You reason in a circle," say they; "the religion proves the truth of the miracles, and the miracles prove the truth of religion." We reply, that the religion may be true, independent of the miracles; and the miracles may have been real, independent of the religion; but the one was designed to give credibility to the other, and both are in perfect harmony with an institution claiming to have been from God. Its proposition and its proof belong to the same family, and have the same parentage. The problems of Euclid are not to be solved by avoirdupois weight, nor the facts of

history by an appeal to mathematics. The proposition and the proof must be consentaneous.

But we have never been able to see the force of the objections urged against the authenticity of the Books of the New Testament. They have arisen either from ignorance of the past, or from malice and presumption. For the same reasons that we receive the writings of Polybius, of Xenophon, of Cæsar, Tacitus, and Quintus Curtius as genuine, because we have uninterrupted evidence of the past in their favor, so we receive the twenty-seven Books of the New Testament, written by their eight distinct authors, as the genuine works which bear their names. To reject these we must reject all others. Indeed the testimony in behalf of their genuineness is greater than that of any other known as standard classics. They were written by better men, by eye-witnesses of what they have reported. By those who extensively taught what they had also written. Their writings were addressed to large societies, and publicly read in widely different portions of the world. But these things cannot be affirmed of any of the writings of profane authors, to which we have referred. In addition to this, an uninterrupted succession of writers, from the days of the Apostles to the present time, have quoted from the records of

the Apostles, and made mention of them; so that if the Books of the New Testament were all destroyed, we could find all the essential facts and testimonies, commands and promises, found therein, in the writings of the first Christians and early Fathers of the Church. This cannot be said of any of the profane classics. We may with greater reason deny the authenticity of all other ancient books, than that of the New Testament. Indeed, all human and recorded testimony, for the same reason, should be discredited and condemned.

Infidelity is a base and wanton surrender of all that is sacred in truth, in fact, and in human testimony. It is an insult offered to our reason and judgment, and our faith in the common honesty of the best specimens of humanity. It is a wicked, ignorant, and presumptuous negation, without reason, and against all testimony. There is nothing in it that is robust and manly. Ostrich-like, it hides its head in the sand when hotly pursued, and deems its own blindness a security from all dangers and peril. It shuts its eyes on all the past, and reduces it to nothingness. It imprisons itself in impenetrable darkness, and says there is no light—no sun. Shame! shame on its miserable pretensions! Its advocates would

not set up an issue, in any court, where the value of a penny was concerned, on such grounds as they oppose the truth of Christianity. No advocate at the bar, however base, would hazard even an equivocal standing in sustaining such a plea; and no court would admit such denials, without sense and without reason, to be heard in its presence, but would dismiss the case, as an insult to the tribunal before which it was brought, and to the sacred principles of truth and justice.

REASONS ASSIGNED BY INFIDELS FOR ITS PROPAGATION.

The early and rapid spread of the gospel, unbelievers have attempted to explain and account for, without an appeal to miracles, in any sense of the term; aware of the fact, that a concession in its favor, on this ground, would be fatal to their views, and a virtual admission of the truth of Christianity. For no one but God can work a miracle, and he would not do it in aid of an imposture, and only for grand and necessary purposes; and therefore the various attempts to set aside this branch of Christian evidence. But it comes up in every department of the argument; and upon the admission of supernatural agency alone, is it believed by us, that Christianity could have been introduced, much less have been rapidly propagated throughout the earth.

Many and serious were the difficulties it had to meet and overcome at its very threshold; and these were of so formidable a character, that they would have arrested its progress and killed it in its infancy, without the aid and appliances to which we refer. These we will briefly state.

First, the moral difficulties which everywhere existed. These obtained to as great an extent in Judea, as among the pagan nations. The abounding corruptions of the world then, as now, presented obstacles insurmountable in the way of the progress and triumph of Christianity, without such aid from on high as miracles afforded. We need not dwell upon the condition of public morals among the Jews; this will be found on every page of Josephus, in his Antiquities, and throughout the whole of the Old and New Testaments. We have but to refer you to these works, and to call attention to the subsequent history of the nation, to prove that a more wicked and corrupt people could not have been found on the earth. And all that may be said on this subject in regard to them, with still greater intensity may be affirmed with respect to the character and condition of the Gentile world. Paul, in his letter to the Romans, the first and second chapters, has given a faithful and graphic picture of the state of public morals, both among the Jews and also the Gentiles; and all contemporaneous history fully sustains his testimony.

The gospel had to meet this world-wide and abounding corruption, and stay it. It was like infancy contending with hosts in armor. Like

a ray of light in opposition to the darkness of the pit. Like an angel in single combat with the legionary armies of Satan. The first word that Christianity uttered was Repentance; not in its ordinary sense as now used, but sorrow for the past, ample restitution for all wrong doing, and perfect and absolute amendment of life for the future; not merely as seen in the outer man, but proceeding from the heart. The tree was to be made good that the fruit might be good. The fountain was to be purified that the streams issuing from it might become pure. It was a radical and thorough amendment of life. John the Baptist, Jesus, the Apostles—all commenced their ministry with this appeal thundering in the ears of men; and no progress could be made in the objects of their mission without this indispensable qualification.

Thus to eradicate all that was evil in the heart of man, to crucify the passions and desires of the corrupt heart, and to reform the life, were its first and constant demand. Its opposition to the spirit and the manners of the world, rendered it a most offensive and impertinent message, and aroused all the latent hostility in the heart, and the open and popular forms of wickedness which then existed. And how could it have succeeded, in the absence of those overwhelming testimonies

to which its success is justly ascribed? Pride and unholy ambition, the praise of men, lust and avarice, blind attachment to state religions, fostering and cherishing all the base and irregular passions of the human heart, hoary superstition, incorporated with the state, and rendered sacred and inviolate by age and prescription, arrayed themselves against it. Vain would have been all attempts to have achieved a triumph with such a combined and prevailing system of abominations to meet and overcome, in the absence of the supernatural appendages which Christianity summoned to its aid.

Secondly. The intellectual difficulties it had to meet. It was the age of refinement. The arts were in a high state of perfection. Science had won some of its proudest trophies. Oratory and philosophy, poetry and painting, in Greece and in Rome, were all cultivated. It was the "Augustan Age," the proudest then known in the history of the world. Judea had its teachers of great renown, and numerous leaders of all the prevailing sects. It has its learned Rabbis, and its respective schools. Greece still maintained its superiority over the world; her arts of peace and her schools, gave her the ascendency. Athens was still in her glory, the seat of literature, the home of poets and philosophers,

the stronghold of idolatry. Her court of Areopagus, the legal acquirements of her judges, and the eloquence of her orators, were proverbial. The distinguished men of Rome still resorted to her schools; and as far as human aid could go, civilization and learning had attained its highest elevation. And yet, in the lands of "Euclid, of Aristotle, and Longinus; of Demosthenes, Solon and Lycurgus; of Homer and Pindar; of Terrence and Varro, Atticus and Cicero, Sallust and Livy, Horace, Ovid, and Virgil," the Apostles not only preached, but made innumerable converts, and established churches which for ages existed, and the remnants of which still continue.

Thus it had to make way, not feebly but powerfully—not by degrees, but immediately—against the moral and intellectual obstacles which opposed its progress. The rulers of the Jews the power of their priests and the decrees of their councils, and the hostility of the nation, on the one hand, could not check it; nor the ignorance, corruption, idolatry, and persecution of the rulers and people in the Gentile world, nor the eloquence and authority of its philosophers arrest its progress.

Either the Apostles must have been superior in intellect and authority to the world around

them; their learning and eloquence must have greatly surpassed every thing then or hitherto known; they must have offered extraordinary bribes to tempt and to fascinate the people, as demagogues seeking for popularity and power; they must have tampered with the prejudices and passions of the people, offering them means and inducements for self-gratification and lust; or they must have been attended in their triumphant march by a system of agency wholly divine. They must have preached "with the Holy Spirit sent down from Heaven."

The five causes assigned by Gibbon for the rapid propagation of Christianity will not account for it, as have been fully shown by the advocates of Christianity. They are these:—

The inflexible and intolerant zeal of the first Christians.

The doctrine of a future life.

The miraculous powers *ascribed* to the primitive churches.

The pure and austere morals of the first Christians.

The union and discipline of the Christian Church,—"or Republic."

These are the secondary causes assigned by Gibbon, one of the most insidious foes of Chris-

tianity, for its rapid spread throughout the Roman empire, in the first ages of its history.

On the first we would ask, How was it possible for "intolerant zeal" to spread a religion which awakened such deadly opposition to it? Their "inflexible" courage might unite the hearts of the Christians together; but a zeal without knowledge, could hardly have prevailed over the settled convictions and habits of ages. But the intolerance lay on the side of their persecutors; and this had more power to check and to restrain, than "the intolerant zeal" of Christians had to conquer and subdue. That they had both courage and zeal no one can deny, but both proceeded from the excellency of the cause they advocated, and their confidence in the divine origin of Christianity.

On the second, we would add: That the doctrine of a future life was not so generally believed by the pagan world, as shown by Watson and others; and one entire sect of the Jews, the Sadducees, repudiated almost every thing that enters into our conceptions of that state, denying the existence of angels and spirits, and the doctrine of the resurrection. Besides, the Apostles insisted upon the resurrections of the body as the means of its enjoyment—a doctrine alike offensive to the Sadducees on the one hand, and the phi-

losophers on the other. And what influence could this doctrine have on the minds of those who were living in ease and voluptuousness, and who could not be induced to forego the pleasures of the present life for any speculations in regard to the future, however true they might be. Nothing but absolute demonstration of the fact of a future life could have availed with them.

The third cause assigned by him was, "the miraculous powers *ascribed* to the primitive church." This, if properly stated, we should have no objections to. It was not the miraculous powers "ascribed," but actually possessed, not by the primitive but the apostolic church, and chiefly by the miraculous powers possessed by the Apostles, to which were owing the spread of the gospel. This, the first opposers of the faith admitted, whilst they ascribed the power by which it was done to magic, or attempted to lessen their importance.

Julian the Apostate said, that "Jesus did nothing wonderful, unless any should esteem that, to have healed some lame and blind, and exorcised some demoniacs, in villages like Bethsaida and Bethany, were very wonderful works!" Now Julian must have known from the same source that he learned the above facts, that Jesus not only healed "some lame and blind, and ex-

orcised demoniacs" in obscure villages, but that he cleansed the leper, gave sight to the blind and life to the dead, and that too in all Judea and Galilee, by the seaside, in open fields, in large cities, and that also in innumerable instances.

Mere pretense would have only subjected the Apostles to contempt, and their cause to shame and infamy. Besides, the world was accustomed to the impositions practiced upon it by the pretended miracles of the gods and the priests, and these were now sunk in public estimation, and had lost their power. Whilst real miracles would have silenced prejudice and carried conviction to the mind, false ones would have awakened not only distrust, but downright opposition and disgust; and this especially toward those who presented Christianity to the world as the only true religion, and preached it for the purpose of displacing all others, by the superior might of its authority, the purity of its doctrine, and solemnity of its sanctions. The pretended wonders of paganism might well be borne with, inasmuch as each god could live on equal terms with all the rest, and each system of idolatry could both tolerate and admit the claims of all others. But a religion which proclaimed a war upon all the prevailing systems of the day, Jewish and

pagan, and which sought their annihilation, in the absence of miracles could not have been received with favor.

From the detected character of popish "signs and wonders," which bear so strong a resemblance to those of Jewish and pagan miracles, we may conclude it probable that they were impostures and lying wonders, but artfully contrived by the more skillful to mislead the ignorant mass, prepared for delusion by that gross superstition and belief in magic which prevailed among them. Simon Magus bewitched the people with his "sorceries;" and Josephus calls the false prophets who appeared at this time among the Jews, *magoi* and *goetes*,—"magicians and sorcerers."

"As to amulets, charms, sorceries and enchantments, the Jews of that age were notoriously credulous; and as incredulous to the real miracles of our Lord and his Apostles."

"The truth of these miracles obtains from this a stronger evidence, and the unbelief of the Jews, a MORAL solution. By a credulous people, they must have been admitted as demonstrative of the doctrine in confirmation of which they were wrought; but they hated the doctrine itself, and their passion overpowered every mental habit, and changed, as to those glorious evidences of

pure and holy truth, the whole character of their minds; nor is this without a parallel. The credulity of infidelity in our own age has often been remarked; and it is exemplified in the readiness with which both those entirely reject the Holy Scriptures, and the critics who would explain away their supernatural character, admit the most absurd theories in opposition to them, and the deceived confidence with which they teach them to others."

The Jews and pagans could not deny the reality of the miracles of Christ and the Apostles. The former, however, from false principles of interpretation of scripture, concerning the Messiah, rejected the miracles, and demanded instead of them a "sign from heaven;" perhaps in allusion to the prophecies of Daniel, in which he speaks of the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven, and being brought before the Ancient of Days, and that there was then given to him glory, dominion, and a kingdom, that all nations, kindreds and people should obey him.

It is more than probable that a false application of this and other ancient predictions, with reference to the second advent of the Messiah, applied by them to his first, was the chief occasion of their refusal to admit the authority of

the ordinary miracles, as wrought by Jesus of Nazareth. It was even after he had performed some of his mightiest works, and given the most satisfactory evidences of his Messiahship, that this "adulterous and sinful generation" sought for "a sign from heaven." Indeed, the miracles performed by the Saviour, was the ground on which they demanded this sign. It is not then to be wondered at, that the Jews should have rejected the authority of the miracles, to have proven Jesus to have been the Messiah, inasmuch as there was one wanting—"the sign from heaven," which would in their judgment have silenced all objections! But this was never promised; it would have falsified the whole of the prophetic scriptures, that spoke of the sufferings of the Messiah, and would have broken the chain of evidence, which proved him to have been the "coming one" of their nation, who was to be in their estimation "a worm and no man," "a reproach of men and despised of the people," whom the nation should "laugh to scorn," "shoot out the lip" and "shake the head," saying—"He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him, seeing he delighted in him."

Only one thing which bore any resemblance to a "sign from heaven," did Jesus promise to the Jews, and that was his resurrection. This

was effected by the direct interposition of the Father in heaven, upon the lifeless body of the Nazarene—Jesus. In it there was no agency, visible and cognizable, of the Messiah, as in the miracles he wrought in person. But although the power which raised up our Lord Jesus from the dead was from heaven, the visible "sign" was rather from the earth than the heavens! They looked for a sign from heaven,—Jesus would furnish them one from the earth! But in so doing, whilst it would better accord with the humility which he assumed as the son of Mary, and the Word that was made flesh, would form an unanswerable proof in all coming ages of his Messiahship. He was demonstrated to be the Son of God with power by his resurrection from the dead.

Nothing but the superior evidences and sensible demonstrations of the Christian religion could have availed in its establishment and progress. The very existence of all these counterfeit and pretended miracles on the part of paganism, show the necessity for just such an array of evidence as the Christian religion gave. These pretended miracles afford a concession in its favor, and prove incontestably that a religion proceeding from God must be accompanied by supernatural proofs of the most unquestionable

character. It was the superior power of the God of the Hebrews, which proved him to have been the true God, in opposition to the gods of the nations. And so, the superior proofs of miraculous agency possessed by the Apostles, showed them to have acted under a commission from on high, and that the religion which they taught was worthy of all acceptation.

It was not then the miracles "*ascribed*" to the Apostles, but those really performed by them, that gave credibility to the doctrine they taught; and therefore the imputation is not only unworthy of those who have made it, but wholly inadequate to account for the prevalence of the Gospel in early times. If the miracles are rejected, then history is but a fable; and effects of the most extraordinary character have been produced without any adequate causes.

But the fourth reason—namely, the pure and austere morals of the first Christians—is indeed quite a singular one. Whence did these Jews and pagans, who first embraced Christianity, derive their pure morals? The very fact that they possessed these extraordinary virtues when the world was sunk in the depths of corruption, show the superior evidence of that faith which wrought such effects upon them and produced such fruits. And how could these produce such

results on others, who stood rebuked by the lives of Christians? Would it not rather have provoked contempt and persecution, and were not these the legitimate effects on the world, as witnessed in the early ages of Christianity? Whilst no greater compliment could have been passed upon the lives of the first Christians than what is found in this proposition, it evidently could not be an assignable cause of the rapid spread of the Gospel. Talent and genius may soon dazzle and attract; but goodness and truth, humanity and benevolence, are slow to win favor or to court admiration. And therefore this secondary cause could not be justly regarded as one of the chief reasons for the success of the Gospel in the early ages of its propagation.

The last secondary cause, mentioned by Gibbon, is "the union and discipline of the Christian" church, or "Republic," as he is pleased to call it.

That Christians in the Apostolic age were united in a common faith, must be admitted; but this would rather provoke hostility, than win favor, to a new religion, which, not only was opposed to all others then existing, but which openly sought their destruction. But it should be remembered that there were many divisions, that early made their appearance among the first

Christians, to which the attention of the Apostles was directed, in their several Epistles, as may be seen by a reference to those sent to the church at Rome, at Corinth, and the churches of Galatia; and the rigid "discipline" to which reference is made, would rather deter those from joining them who were disposed to retain their vicious habits, and who would be unwilling to submit to the wholesome and reformatory restraints of the Gospel of Christ.

It was only after Christianity had overrun the empire, and won its first and noblest triumph, and the days of miracles had ceased, and the ancient purity of the Christian profession had degenerated, that any thing like a "republic" supported by the state, came into existence. This happened three hundred years after the date of the first events occurred on the day of Pentecost, which celebrated the coronation of the Prince and Saviour of the world, and won to his cause, three thousand subjects, by the ministry of the Apostles; when the church assumed the form of a "republic," and obtained the empire, it had lost its original form, and hereafter must be regarded as the apostacy—"the man of sin,"—"the son of perdition," spoken of by the Apostles, in their several letters. But before the unhallowed union of church and state, the Gospel had over-

run the Roman world, and by the power of its truth, and the force of its testimonies, had placed itself, not only in the hearts of millions, but on the throne of the Cæsars.

In this argument, it will be necessary for the reader to distinguish between the primitive and the apostolic church. Ecclesiastic historians are not always safe guides on this subject; as they are too apt to be dazzled by the splendor of the apostate, rather than by the simple and unadorned appearance of the apostolic church. This has been a fruitful source of error and confusion in the consideration of this subject.

Christianity won its first and noblest triumphs before it was received into favor by the state. It made its way, by the force of its mighty testimonies, into "Cæsar's household," without asking any favor from the emperor, or receiving any from the empire. And if it placed itself upon the throne, it did so by the strength of its superior demonstrations, and the might of its divine authority. But what it gained from the state, was at the loss of its secret power. And the greatest evil which befell the church, was the "help" which the state impertinently afforded her. It was the coil of the serpent around the family of Christ, which nearly crushed and fatally crippled it for ages, and from which it has not yet re-

covered. It was like the brawny hug of the bear, around the fragile and delicate form of a virgin, which killed while it caressed her. In vain may we look for the apostolic church, after she was wedded to the state; she lost her first and only lawful husband by this spiritual adultery. And henceforth, whatever may be the trappings by which she was adorned, and the splendid tiara she wore, she was shorn of all her ancient beauty and glory, and was henceforth despoiled and dishonored.

In the apostolic churches there was a unity of faith and a fellowship of spirit, which indicated that they belonged to one head, and were in fact one body. But in vain may we look within the first century of the Christian church, for any external form of confederation between distant towns and cities, states and kingdoms. The diocesan, metropolitan and patriarchal forms of organization belong to a much later period, and so of the episcopal.

Mosheim says, that "each individual church, which had a bishop or presbyter of its own, assumed to itself the form and rights of a little distinct republic or commonwealth; and with regard to its internal concerns, was wholly regulated by a code of laws, that if they did not originate with, had at least received the sanction

of the people constituting such church." This is said with respect to the earliest churches.

Neander also says, "In regard to the relations of the presbyters to the churches, they were appointed, not to exercise unlimited authority, but to act as the leaders and rulers of ecclesiastic republics; to transact any thing in connection with the church, not as lords of the same, but as servants."

The independence of the churches, one of another, is fully and clearly presented by Mosheim. "Although all the churches were, in this first age of Christianity, united together in one common bond of faith and love, and were in every respect ready to promote the interest and welfare of each other, by a reciprocal interchange of good offices, yet, with regard to government and internal economy, every individual church considered itself as an independent community; none of them ever looking beyond the circle of its own members for assistance, or recognizing any sort of external influence or authority." He adds, "It is not until the second century that any traces of that sort of association from whence councils took their origin, are to be perceived; when we find them occurring here and there, some of them tolerably clear and distinct, others again but slight and faint, which seems plainly to prove

that the practice arose subsequently to the times of the Apostles."

"Wherever religion has been established by law," says Robert Hall, "with splendid emoluments and dignities annexed to its profession, the clergy, who are candidates for these distinctions, will ever be prone to exalt the prerogative; not only to strengthen the arm on which they lean, but that they may the more successfully ingratiate themselves in the favor of the prince." He adds, "The boasted alliance between church and state, on which so many encomiums have been lavished, seems to have been little more than a compact between the priest and the magistrate, to betray the liberties of mankind, both civil and religious."

It was not owing to the organization of a mighty ecclesiastic Republic then, that Christianity achieved such triumphs; for such an organization was the growth of centuries; but its victories were all won in the first ages of its existence, before such confederations were seen or known.

The first œcumenical council, which arose out of the dispute between Alexander and Arius, by the order of Constantine, in A. D. 325, established a creed of human device, recognized the right of punishing heretics, gave a fuller development to

the man of sin, and established the kingdom of the clergy. From hence arose the "Republic," of which Gibbon and others speak.

It was at this time that Dupin remarks, that "Bishops met together with liberty, being supported by the princes, and made abundance of rules concerning the ordinances of the church. Previous to this the discipline was plain and simple, and the church had no other splendor to recommend it but what the holiness of the manners of the lives of the Christians gave it."

Jones, in his history remarks, that "the effects of this general council were to lay the foundation of a system of persecution, of a complexion altogether new; professing Christians tyrannizing over the consciences of each other, and inflicting tortures and cruelties far greater than they had sustained from their heathen persecutors."

In the argument we have instituted for the truth of Christianity, the reader will bear in mind the obvious distinction between the Apostolic church, and that order of things which subsequently gained dominion over the empire by a conformity to the spirit and customs of the world. We doubt not but that Infidelity would be shorn of more than half its boasted strength, if this distinction should be observed. It is not Chris-

tianity on the throne of the Cæsars, but Christianity enthroned in the hearts of its faithful and devoted subjects, to which we refer. It is not the church in alliance with the state, and under the patronage of princes, to which we invite your attention, but the church in alliance with its only head the Messiah, and in its relationship to the heavens, from which its author and founder came, on which our argument rests. It is not the church in the second or third centuries, but the church as it was founded by the Apostles, built upon the Rock—Christ, and which had its beginning in the City of Jerusalem, on the day of Pentecost, immediately after the ascension of the Messiah, and which spread itself like the arms of the Ocean, until it embraced the world; it is to this church we invite attention, and on which our argument alone rests. We entreat the reader to keep this fact constantly before his mind, in the consideration of this great subject.

It was not even the church of the Old Testament, with its awful and glorious services; with its High Priest, seen by the worshipers in his emblazoned breast-plate—a church once spoken to in thunder and enveloped in thick darkness. It was not the symbolic institution of the Jews, having its seat in the earthly Jerusalem, but the true spiritual temple, built on the foundation

of Christ and the Apostles; embodying in itself the prediction of her prophets, the antitype of all its strange and pregnant hieroglyphics, and having for its head the anointed Lord, the "Root and the offspring of David"—the crowned monarch of the Universe.

THE CHURCH A WITNESS FOR THE TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY.

We present the reader some additional evidence for the truth of Christianity arising out of its establishment, and early and rapid propagation. The subject is a large one, and deserves particular attention; but we shall only now offer a few facts in relation to that new organism—the church, as a witness for the truth of Christianity. We beg the reader to examine well that famous declaration, "Upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*

Many works have been written on the subject of Christian Evidence, and those who are interested in its examination should avail themselves of all the light which a question of such importance demands. No one should think lightly of or cease his investigations until he has compassed the ground legitimately occupied by it, to enable him to form an independent judgment in regard to it.

* Matt. xvi. 18.

It is easy to find fault, still easier to deny; and where argument fails, to resort to sophistry and wit. But matters of fact, which have claimed the attention of the world for twenty centuries, and still holds it, demand the most grave and earnest consideration.

God has favored the world with three dispensations—the Patriarchal, the Jewish, and the Christian. The first was a family religion, and adapted to the infancy of the race; the second, was a national religion, and was given to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and the last is the religion of the world, and designed to be of perpetual obligation. Whilst the two former have passed away, the latter continues, and will continue to the end of time. It was given to man, in view of his spiritual necessities and wants, and in anticipation of all the laws of human progress and intellectual development, which should characterize the race. Neither the Patriarchial or the Jewish religions could have become universal. They were suited perfectly to the ages, and the people immediately interested in them; but they were wanting in those elements of popularity, which would give them free access to the human heart; and in those broad and expansive principles, which alone can vitalize the great masses of the people, and be alike

received and welcomed by the ignorant and the learned; affording light and testimony to satisfy all minds, and a reasonable and permanent basis for the faith and the hope of an alienated world to rest upon.

It is worthy of remark, that no false or corrupt forms of religion, ever have, or can become universal;—not even paganism itself. This assumes the protean shape of every country that comes under it; so that the gods of one country are not recognized by another; and the forms of their worship differ as widely as the objects of their religious homage. The gods of Egypt would be "strange gods" in Greece; and these equally as strange among the Druids of the ancient Britons; neither of them could displace the rest; and no form of paganism ever could become universal. This is equally true in regard to the religion of Mahomet, the false prophet. By force of arms, he and his followers endeavored to give it universality; but in this they failed; and now the crescent is not only in its wane, but its last horn will soon be extinguished, and that forever. It is doomed to destruction, as no earthly power can uphold or save it. A momentary respite has been afforded by the aid of the allied powers of Europe; but it will sink by the weight of its own corruption, or fall by its

own weakness, and will be merged in the stronger powers which now sustain or menace it.

And the same may with equal truth be said of the great western apostacy—the Papacy, which had its rise coeval with Mohammedanism, and whose history and fortunes in prophecy, if not blended together, at least stand side by side; and the destruction of the one, will be a certain pledge of the downfall of the other. This great despotism, combining the elements of paganism, Judaism, and all the corruptions of Christianity, —the growth of centuries;—during the darkest ages of the history of the church never was, and it never can be catholic or universal. It is the *Roman* Catholic,—not the world-wide catholic religion. It is the religion of the Pope, not the religion of Christ. The apostacy—not apostolicity. It is a local, not a universal religion. It seeks to obtain empire by the sword as well as by the voice—by forms which overpower the senses rather than by truth. But priests, even in their best estate, living in the contemplation of spiritual things, are not personally fitted for handling worldly matters; and preachers make the silliest and worst politicians of the state. And history shows, that while the ministry were poor and dependent on their flocks for support, the church was in her best spiritual condition; when

they became rich and powerful, their morals became corrupt, and their zeal and enthusiasm decayed.

The Messiah, during his personal mission, announced his intention of establishing permanently on the earth, an institution called The Church, which should survive all other organizations; and this was not only in fulfillment of his own predictions, but in accordance with the prophecies of the Old Testament.

We choose to select this special item, in order to avoid the ordinary method of approaching the subject of Christian evidence; not because it is the strongest ground that may be assumed, but that its novelty may arrest and summon your attention more directly to it.

You will please look at the difficulties Jesus of Nazareth had to encounter, in order to secure his designs, each of which he must meet and overcome, or his pretensions could not be sustained, and his mission prove a failure.

Jesus was obscure in his birth and parentage. He was without education or authority as a man. He was not while on earth a priest, being of the tribe of Judah, of which no mention is made of the priesthood. He was not a ruler or a prince. He had no use for the sword or the sceptre. He was poor and dependent. His followers were a

few women of Gallilee and a small number of disciples chosen from the humblest ranks of life—chiefly publicans and sinners. His apostles for the most part were fishermen. With these he designed to form an organization that should last forever,—until the consummation of all things.

It will be remembered that when this design was announced by the Saviour, Jerusalem was still standing, the capital of the kingdom of the Jews. The temple, as the centre of the religious services of that nation, was then in existence, and the tribes of the Lord continually, day and night, waited upon its grand and imposing ritual. The morning and the evening sacrifices were daily made. The high priest and the inferior ministers of the sanctuary held undisputed influence and authority over the Jewish nation, as they had indeed for centuries presided over the services of a people, whose cherished hope and belief were that the nation and its religion would exist forever. Jealous of their honor; holding with the utmost tenacity to the religion of Moses and the tradition of their fathers, they never for a moment supposed that any other form of religion, or any institution, could rival their own, much less displace and abolish it. And yet in that very nation, in the capital of that kingdom, in the precincts of its temple, a new organism would

commence under the Messiah, that should not only succeed and triumph, but should see, according to the predictions of the Nazarene, Jerusalem sacked and burned; its splendid palaces and dwellings humbled in the dust, its walls in ruins, its temple demolished, and the nation spoiled and scattered, until the times of the Gentiles should be accomplished—a prophecy which not only has the witness of eighteen centuries past for its fulfillment; but which still, to this day, stands before us a monument of the truth of his mission who spake it.

It must also be remembered that serious and formidable difficulties, of a personal character, lay before him, which his own prescience saw, and his divine power and authority anticipated and overcome. He was first to die—not an ordinary death, not quietly on his couch, with friends around to comfort and sustain him; but to die by the hand of violence—to die as a public malefactor. Not according to the usages of his own nation; but to die by the act of crucifixion, by the "wicked hands" of the Gentiles,—by the authority of the Roman government. And this he predicted in the clearest terms and in the most express language. How simply ridiculous! How absurd and presumptuous! How contrary to all the hopes and calculations of men, for one to

found an empire on his own death; an empire, too, that depended on his life both to give it birth and to endow it with vitality and permanency. His death, to all appearance, would have been the certain ruin of all his prospects; and yet confident of success, he dies, and by means the most unlooked for, and events the most extraordinary, he achieves his noble and sublime purposes. He dies, but he rises from the dead. He ascends to the heavens. He takes the possession of the throne of the universe. He commissions his Gallilean fishermen to proclaim the great facts of his death, and burial, and resurrection to the world. He promises by his Spirit to co-operate with them; and, as the Advocate of his cause, to grant them success in the enterprise with which they were entrusted. Now the success of his designs in the establishment of the new institution,—the church, depended upon the conditions of which we have spoken; and these conditions could never have been met and overcome, but by aid not only divine, but wholly beyond the reach of human wisdom and human agency to conceive, much less to have accomplished. Let it then be remembered that his death, his burial, his resurrection, his ascension, his coronation, and the bestowment of his Spirit, with all the splendid gifts accompanying his presence, were each and

all necessary to the attainment of his objects. Surely these were enough to have arrested the boldest adventurer; to have subdued the wildest spirit of ambition ever entertained; and to have rendered vain and nugatory the best laid plans of human device ever known. No dream of the enthusiast, no vagaries of the insane; not the wildest scheme of knight-errantry ever were so hopeless and unattainable as the designs of Jesus unless aided from on high. As soon would we expect the Delaware river to run up stream to its sources—the ocean to change its bed for the dry land—the cities of New York and Philadelphia in a day be depopulated, and the land converted into a desert; as soon see the sun rise in the west and set in the east, and the heavens and the earth perish at the bidding of a Mormon prophet,—as to expect that Jesus of Nazareth, without the supernatural powers he possessed, accomplish the purposes he designed with the difficulties which lay in his path. But he said to Peter, when he confessed him to be "the Christ—the son of the living God," "On this rock," the grand Oracle he had confessed, "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." He does not say on this rock have I built, but "on this rock will I build my church." The church

was not as yet built. The Christian temple had not been erected. Like another David, he was gathering the materials for it; but he must die, be raised again from the dead, and crowned Lord of all, before even the corner-stone should be laid, or the chief builders, according to rule, place the "spiritual stones" upon its walls. It was to be built upon the foundation of the prophets and the apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner-stone. Peter was merely one of the stones of this foundation. Jesus Christ was the chief corner. He was "the STONE which the Jewish builders," like the papal, have rejected, but which has become the head of the corner.

Few seem to know the grand designs of the Messiah in the establishment of the church, much less its true scriptural origin and principles. Not only is this so with regard to those who are outside of its sacred precincts, but also those who are members of it. It is called in scripture by many noble and endearing names, as the kingdom—the kingdom of heaven—Jerusalem from above—the temple of God—the body of Christ, —the bride—the Lamb's wife—the church of the living God. The word church indicates a class of people "called out" from the world,—a separate and distinct community. The word has been appropriated to the Jewish nation—called

out from Egypt, and separated from this and all other nations. Not that the Jewish nation was, in any sense of the term, the church of Christ. It was simply "the church in the wilderness," and the shadow of good things to come.

An Apostle has spoken of three grand divisions of the race: "the Jews, the Gentiles, and the church of God." The latter, namely, the church, is a third element, composed of men taken out of the two former. It is in the world but not of it. A kingdom among the kingdoms. As integral parts of the nations, Christians may be called Jews or Gentiles, and in the smaller divisions, barbarians, Scythians, bond and free, male and female; but in the organism called the Church, they are dwellers in Mount Zion—citizens of the kingdom, members of the body of Christ, stones in the spiritual temple;—the called, the faithful, the sanctified. These great formal distinctions are all recognized, and are not to be confounded one with the other in the New Testament.

The blending of church and state is a most unhallowed marriage. It is spiritual adultery, and one of the highest offenses known. No greater evidence can be given of an incurable apostacy than this. The Church of England, of which Victoria is the head; and of Rome, of which the Pope is the sovereign pontiff, are both

monstrous abortions. It is a league formed between Christ and Belial—the church and the world. It is one of the spiritual frauds of Satan to defeat the objects of Christ in the formation of the church. They have effectually destroyed the barrier existing between the kingdoms of darkness and of light. In all such compacts, the church, instead of converting the world has been converted by it, and has furnished infidelity with the most potent weapons against the truth. Nothing but a divorce from this corrupt alliance can save such churches from ruin and loss. "Come out of her, my people," is the voice of Christ to all those who are in Babylon.

The first historical notice of the church as an organized body, is to be found in the last verse of the second chapter of the Acts: "And the Lord added to the church such as should be saved." The nucleus of the church consisted of one hundred and twenty disciples, male and female. To this may be added the Apostles. The first accessions on the day of Pentecost consisted of three thousand converts. This was the pledge of her triumph. At the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, three thousand rebels were slain; but at the advent of the Gospel, three thousand men, dead in trespasses and in sins were brought to life. Singular coincidence! How different

the organism of the Jewish and the Christian churches! The law came by Moses—the grace and the truth by Jesus Christ. Small as was the church in its beginning—compared in one of the parables to a grain of mustard seed, it was destined to fill the whole earth. It is the arch of promise spanning the heavens, with one foot resting on the day of Pentecost, in the earthly Jerusalem, and the other, on the heavenly Jerusalem, in that jubilee which shall announce the descent and herald the presence of the King of kings and Lord of lords! The chord of this arch reaches from Jerusalem that then was to the Jerusalem that shall be. In short, the Jerusalem church, and not the church of Rome, is the mother of all the churches. She has antiquity, apostolicity, and is destined to have universality.

God had from the beginning his witnesses on the earth from Abel to Noah, and from him to Abraham; but no community of saints, no assembly of believers, no stated meetings for worship, no *Ecclesia* or church is spoken of during this long period. We hear of men who "walked with God," "believers," "the righteous," "sons of God," but no organism called the church. In the days of Moses we hear for the first time of an assembly—called by Stephen, the first Chris-

tian martyr—"the church in the wilderness;" but we must not identify this with the church of Christ. The nation of Israel was in many respects typical of the church of the Redeemer. It had its "called out" from Egypt, its temporal Saviour, its lawgiver and mediator, its high priest and sacrifice, its tabernacle and Canaan. But we must not confound the shadow with the substance, the old covenant with the new—the son of the bondwoman with the children of the free.

Many were the promises made to the fathers of the nation, and to their descendants; and to David in particular, that he would raise up one —the seed of Abraham—the royal son of the house of David, who should sit on his throne and rule and reign forever. Jesus came in the fulness of the times; he was born of a woman—the son of a virgin—born under the law—born in Bethlehem. Thus was he the son of Abraham, and was allied to the Jews—the son of David, and was allied to royalty—the son of man, and was allied to the race, to the world—the son of the living God, and allied to the Father. All these relations he sustained, in becoming the Incarnate Word.

Heaven and earth unite in his person. He touches humanity at every point and lays his hand upon the throne of the universe. He who was

rich became poor, that he might not only sympathize with the great masses of the race—always poor and despised; but after accomplishing the work of redemption, he is exalted and reinvested with all royal honors and offices, that he might honor, enrich, and bless those who came under his dominion. His death opens up the way of pardon for the guilty, his burial reconciles us to the solitude of the grave, his resurrection demonstrates the fact of man's immortality—body, soul and spirit. His ascension secures to us the inheritance that is incorruptible and unfading in the heavens; and his perfected and glorious humanity is the pledge and type to us, of what awaits his redeemed family, in the everlasting kingdom over which he reigns.

One of the first things which he did after his exaltation, was to bestow with a kingly hand "his gifts to men." In the plenitude of his benevolence, he scatters munificently his largesses, his divine bounties, upon the infant church and his chosen Apostles. He sends down the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of ancient prophecy and his own promise. He administers his own baptism of light and love in the abundant influences he sheds upon the Apostles and the splendid gifts he confers upon them. He now, by his Spirit, inhabits the church as God did originally the

temple; and as an act of royalty he pardons three thousand of those who had been his betrayers and murderers, and attaches them to his person and government. Now, it is certain that no organization like this had ever before existed; no such gifts had ever been bestowed on men. No events can rival those that commemorate the coronation of the King of Zion, and the commencement of his reign.

Prophecy reaches its culminating point in the great events of that day, so far as the kingdom of heaven in its present form is concerned. Hear what one of the ancient seers had said, centuries before the events occurred. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord's house, shall be established in the tops of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways and we will walk in his paths: *For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.*" (Isaiah ii. 2, 3.) Jesus commands his Apostles to begin their labors in Jerusalem. To go there and tarry in that city until they should be endued with power from on high. That the repentance and remis-

sion of sins to be preached to all nations in his name, was to commence in that city. And that the promised baptism of the Spirit should take effect there. All these facts are in exact fulfillment of the prophecies above referred to, and the repeated declarations of the Messiah.

From the fact then of such an organization so unique and original, which in its origin had to encounter so many difficulties in the death, the burial, the resurrection, the ascension of the Messiah; an institution set up by illiterate fishermen in the capital of the kingdom of the Jews, and in the sacred precincts of the temple; which won its first triumphs among those who crucified the King; and which occurred in exact fulfillment of many prophecies, and according to the expressed and repeated declarations of the Messiah—an order of things which survived the nation and the city in which it originated, and which overrun the Roman empire and saw its decline and fall; which survived the dark ages and dwelt in the rocks and fastnesses of the mountains, when the world was "drunk with the wine of Babylon," and "wondered after the Beast," and which still lives, fresh as the dew of heaven, "clear as the sun, fair as the moon, and as terrible," to the wicked and ungodly, "as an army with banners." That such an in-

stitution as this should have originated under the circumstances to which we have referred,—and these circumstances can alone account for its existence,—and that it still exists, and is full of promise for its perpetuity, are demonstrations in proof of the truth of Christianity which should silence all the cavils of sceptics, and solve their doubts and difficulties. The church now stands as "the pillar and foundation of the truth," having inscribed upon it, in letters of light, "Great is the mystery of Godliness. God was manifested in flesh, justified by the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on by the world, received up into glory."

Coleridge in his "Literary Remains" thus expresses himself: "The result of my own meditations is, that the evidence of the gospel, taken as a total, is as great for the Christians of the nineteenth century, as for those of the apostolic age. I should not be startled if I were told they were greater. But it does not follow that this equally holds good of each component part. An evidence of the most cogent clearness unknown to the primitive Christians, may compensate for the evanescence of some evidence which they enjoyed. Evidences comparatively dim have waxed into noon-day splendor, and the comparative wane of others once effulgent, is more

than indemnified by the synopsis of all which we enjoy, and by the standing miracle of a christendom commensurate and almost synonymous with the civilized world."

The wonder of the existence and subsistence of a church in the world is so great, that Agustine says strikingly and with a deep truth, "that to believe or not to believe the miracles is only choosing an alternative of wonders. If you do not believe the miracles, you must believe this miracle, that the world was converted without miracles."

If the day of miracles has ceased, if "signs and wonders" no longer indicate the presence of God in giving proof to the authority of a divine institution, it is because they are no longer needed. There is no necessity for the re-enactment of the facts which constitute testimony, when the witnesses already have deposed, and their evidence has been recorded. The heavens still show the glory of God, though no Joshua is present to command the sun "to stand still on Gibeon, or the moon on Ajalon." The church exists as the pillar and ground of the truth, and equally with the heavens reflects the glory of its origin and the authority of its founder.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DEMONSTRATED BY THE EARLY AND RAPID SPREAD OF THE GOSPEL.

Language and religion are both from God. He gave us one when he gave us the other. They both claim him as their author. If God had never spoken to man he would himself have been always silent; or at least, his speech would have been but the natural signs of feeling, rather than of sentiment; the expressions of instinct, rather than the intelligible symbols of reason and of thought.

Speech was one, at the beginning; and would have remained so, had men continued to live side by side, without being scattered abroad in separate and distinct communities; this—reason, universal language, and scripture, all corroborate. As in the family so in the state, all by necessity learn to speak the same language. In the infancy of the world, there was but one language, and there could have been but one.

Univocal speech, however, in the course of time was lost, and men separated into distinct communities, and spoke in different dialects; and so have continued from that day to this. The only

account to be relied on for this difference, is that which is found in the scriptures of truth. It was by a direct act of God, for the impiety and rebellion of the race, that the one language was lost and speech became confused. "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there. And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. And they said, Go to, let us build a city, and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth. And the Lord came down to see the city and the tower which the children of men builded. And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one and they have all one language; and this they begin to do; and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do. Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech. So the Lord scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth; and they left off to build the city. Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the Lord did there confound the language of all

the earth. And from thence did the Lord scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth." (Gen. xi. 1–9.) It was then by impiety and disobedience that men lost the one language, which was originally spoken and which bound them together; and after their language became confused, they separated into distinct communities, and peopled the earth.

Whatever evil may have fallen upon the race by the loss of the one language, the confusion of tongues compelled them to seek other lands and people them; and thereby the original designs of God were subserved, in subduing the earth, and in taking possession of the vast domain which he has given to man. In addition to which, the spirit of evil was suddenly checked; and the race was thus prevented from reaching that perfection of wickedness, to which it was tending by too close a contact, and by the influence of a common language. Since then, from the germs of the separate and distinct languages precipitated upon man at the tower of Babel, all the forms of speech and innumerable dialects existing on the earth have sprung. The entire number of known languages and dialects in the world is 3664, and are thus distributed: American, 1624; Asiatic, 937; European, 587; African, 276; Oceanic, 240.

During the Jewish institution, no attempt was made to remedy this defect by the use of a common language or the gift of tongues. Whatever may have been the nature and extent of the miracles which originated that politico-religious system, it is certain that the gift of tongues, formed no part of it. As it was a divine institution, and partook in its structure of the supernatural, miracles were used not only at its commencement, but in the different stages of its history. And these miracles were in perfect harmony with it, though in many respects they differed in kind from those found in Christianity. They assumed the shape and form, and partook more of the nature of law than of grace; and therefore the ten plagues of Egypt, the smiting of the waters of the Red Sea, and all the phenomena of the desert. Mute nature was the theatre over which presided that dread power which was present, in its guardianship of ancient Israel. And the scale upon which these miracles was seen, corresponded with the magnitude of the evils sought to be corrected; and therefore nations felt and were appealed to by them. Egypt on the one hand, and Israel on the other. It was a contest between Jehovah, as lord of the whole earth, and the gods of the nations,—the gods of the "hills and the valleys." And as

polytheism had become a stupendous power, having its seat in Egypt—the most enlightened portion of the globe—it was deemed necessary, that this contest for pre-eminence should be kept open, public, and exhibited upon as large a scale as was needed to accomplish the objects designed. But even then, there was not the same freedom in the exercise of this power, by Moses and the prophets, as by the Saviour and his Apostles. The rod of Aaron was always in his hand, as the instrument of that strange work; or the tree must be cast into the waters of Marah, to change and to sweeten them. And the same was true, in regard to the miracles wrought by Joshua, at the walls of Jericho—the process was slow, though the result was certain; and so of the miracles of Elijah and Elisha, and other prophets in the Jewish age. But it is worthy of remark, that the highest form of the supernatural—that of the gift of tongues—a miracle purely spiritual and ethical, never was known under the Jewish age. It was no part of the agency necessary to accomplish the objects of that fleshly institution. It would not have been homogeneous; it was not in fact needed; and God does nothing in vain.

Judaism was the religion of a single family, or community of families; all speaking the same

language, and there was no necessity for an appeal to foreign tongues, in order to subserve the purposes of that religion. Besides, it was not a proselyting institution; the nations of the earth were not to be converted to it. No apostles were to be sent to other people, to introduce them to the knowledge of Judaism; much less was it required, that the world should be embraced within the domain of this religion. The very nature of the institution forbade it.

The Jews were the descendants of a single family. They received the rite of circumcision as a fence, to guard them from all other nations. Their language, their civil and religious observances, were designed to keep them apart from all other people; and the territory they occupied secluded them from contact with all others. Even the seven nations which inhabited the land of Canaan were first subdued before the Jews could, with safety, take possession of the land promised to them and their fathers; and they were forbidden to form any alliance with them. For a similar reason they were forbidden to raise or purchase horses, and other beasts of burden, lest they might return into Egypt, or make incursions into neighboring countries. From these considerations the gift of tongues was not required, either by the people or the nature of the

institution under which they lived. It was not demanded by them for religion or commerce, or for intercourse with other nations.

Christianity was designed for the race, and was to be of perpetual obligation; and therefore in its permanent establishment upon the earth, this gift was needed. Besides, it more happily corresponded with the spiritual nature of Christianity; as this was the perfection of all God's revelations to man, and was given to him when he had reached his majority, and had passed from the leading strings of infancy and childhood. It was proper that a gift of all others the purest and the least suspicious, and one which anticipated the elements of progress, should have been thus bestowed. That the gift of tongues was not continued, but has passed away with the other "signs and wonders" of the apostolic age, is by no means anomalous; nor is it to be regretted. The effect of this gift upon those who possessed it in the church at Corinth, shows that it would not have been desirable to continue it during the entire existence of the Christian age. "Knowledge puffeth up—love builds up." The moral is superior to the intellectual. "The faith, the hope, and the love," were to abide forever, in the church, after this and all other miracles should have passed away. Had this gift been

continued in the church, civilization would never have attained its present form. The mind, passive in the reception of language, would never have reached that improvement and elevation now attained, if left entirely to its influence.

While then this gift was needed to introduce and establish Christianity on the earth, and for its rapid spread throughout the world, it is not required as a means to propagate it during all the ages of its existence. It would have been contrary to all the dealings of God with men, that it should be so. He requires us to exercise our reason and intellect on all subjects, and by every method that the nature of the case may demand. And as language is attainable by the ordinary processes of instruction and application; and as the exercise of the mind in its attainment is one of great value, it was far better that the mind should remain in the free use of all the means and appliances, which nature and art furnished, than to continue a gift which belongs rather to infancy than to manhood. For in acquiring the language in which we are born the mind is perfectly passive as in the reception of a spiritual gift; and it makes no more special effort in the one case than in the other. Our vernacular speech is a gift bestowed upon us by our parents. But this is not the case in regard to a

foreign tongue; we must acquire it by our own personal and often painful efforts. And here we see, as in thousands of instances, a striking example of the analogy subsisting between nature and religion.

In the infancy of the new church—that "One New Man,"—as in all infancy, language was a gift. But when infancy gives place to maturity, then the mind is left to its own native powers, under the conditions of its being, to pursue its own course. The gift of tongues, like all other supernatural "helps," belonged to a state of absolute helplessness. The infant church would have perished without such aid. But neither in nature or in religion is it proper to regard or treat the members as if they were always in a state of infancy or nonage. In regard to the new born child of God, an Apostle said, "I have fed you with milk and not with meat." Milk for babes, meat for full-grown men, is the order both of nature and of religion. The gift of tongues was demanded by the church in its infancy; but when it became a man, it put away this and all other "childish things."

Some have thought, that the spiritual gifts of the apostolic church would have continued, had she remained pure and uncorrupt from the beginning; but we have no such idea. And

many, even now, deem it desirable, that they should be restored, and actually labor under the delusion that they have been or will be, as in the case of Edward Irving and his followers, and the more shameful imposture of Mormonism. But no one who understands the nature of Christianity, or the element of progress which it has developed, could entertain such an opinion, or harbor such a wish. They virtually declare that Christianity has proved a failure, and that its original testimonies were insufficient, and would, in a spiritual sense, realize the monstrous idea, of a man entering the second time "into his mother's womb" in order to undergo a second birth. No such acts are to be found either in the natural or in the spiritual kingdom, To confirm the views here given, and to prove that the moral elements of the Gospel should "abide," after the "helps" referred to had passed away, see 1 Cor., xiii.

Spiritual gifts, including the one under consideration, were predicted as consequent upon the ascension of the Messiah, and as indicating the commencement of the new dispensation. Ps. lxviii. 17, 18; Eph. iv., 8–13; Heb. ii. 4; 1 Cor. xiv. 21; Isaiah xxviii. 11; Joel ii. 28–32.

All these spiritual gifts were bestowed by the Messiah after his ascension to the heavens,

whither he had gone to receive from the Father the Comforter, (the Advocate,) the Holy Spirit,—to be sent in his name, to teach the Apostles all things connected with the objects of their mission, and to bring to their remembrance whatever the Messiah had hitherto taught them, and to be his witness to the world. "But the comforter,—which is the Holy Spirit,—whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." (John xiv. 26.) "But when the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." (John xv. 26.)

It is worthy of remark, and will show the admirable precision with which the Apostles speak on all things connected with Christianity, that Paul affirms, "that no man can say that *Jesus is Lord*, but by the Holy Spirit." (1 Cor. xii. 3.) He does not say, that no one can affirm that "he is the Christ, the son of the living God" but by the Holy Spirit, but that no one can say that Jesus is "Lord." It was by the revelation of the Father, that we learn that Jesus is his son; but it is by the revelation of the Holy Spirit,—as on the day of Pentecost,—that we are assured that he is "Lord,"—the crowned and anointed

Lord of the universe. (Math. xvi. 16–19; Acts ii. 33–36.) Had it not been for the "ministry of the Spirit," which commenced on the day of Pentecost, the unseen and absent "Lord" would never, as such have been known; and therefore no one could say he was Lord but by "the Holy Spirit." This does not refer to any special communications to men now at their conversion, but to the open, public announcement of his sovereignty on the day of his coronation.

And here we will offer a few remarks on the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

In no sense of the word did this ever occur under the Old Testament, or during the personal ministry of Christ on earth. John baptized in water, and so did the disciples of Jesus, during the period to which we refer. And in the last commission given to the Apostles, they were commanded by the Messiah to baptize (in water) all the converts they made. But it was the special prerogative of the crowned Lord and Christ, to administer the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

"I indeed baptize you with (in) water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear; he shall baptize you with (in) the Holy Spirit and in fire." (Matt. iii. 11.) "For John truly baptized with (in) water; but you shall be

baptized with (in) the Holy Spirit, not many days hence." (Acts i. 5.)

This baptism of the Holy Spirit was designed to communicate the gift of tongues, and invariably accompanied it. "And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, (viz. the Apostles,) and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts ii. 4) This occurred on the day of Pentecost for the benefit of the Jewish people. Another baptism of the Spirit is recorded with special reference to the Gentile world. "While Peter yet spoke these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all them which heard the word; for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God." (Acts x. 44, 46.) It was this baptism of the Holy Spirit that gave assurance to Peter that the Gentiles were to be received into the kingdom, and justified him in their baptism in water. He refers expressly to their baptism in the Holy Spirit as evinced by the gift of tongues bestowed on the Gentiles, and in fulfillment of the word of the Lord. "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord how that he said, John indeed baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." (Acts xi. 15, 16.)

Only on two occasions was the baptism of the Holy Spirit administered; and these were of a distinctly marked character. The first was on the day of Pentecost, when the gospel was preached to the Jews; and the second, in the house of Cornelius, when the same gospel was preached to the gentiles. In the commencement of the reign, over these two grand divisions of the race, did Jesus, with his own hand, perform this act. Paul refers to this open and public event, when he says, "By one spirit *are* we all baptized into *one* body, whether we be Jews or gentiles." (1 Cor. xii. 13.) Into the one body the Church—Jews and Gentiles, at the origin of the Christian institution were constitutionally admitted. This he speaks of when dwelling upon the "diversities" of the operations of the Spirit, under the head of spiritual gifts.

In no case was this a necessary part of the process of their conversion. Indeed it is doubtful if the Apostles, (who were Jews, and at the time disciples), were not the only persons who received this baptism on the day of Pentecost, and it is certain that the gentiles heard the word, and believed, before they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. It was not to be repeated then nor at any subsequent period. It served the purpose of a recognition of the Jews on the one

hand, and of the gentiles on the other, into the one body of Christ; and as an introduction into that higher spiritual element which presided over it. Just as baptism to the penitent believer, in water, is to be administered but once, in order to enter into Christ, so the Spirit's baptism was administered once to the Jews and once to the gentiles. The baptism of the Spirit, like all other spiritual gifts, has passed away, having answered the purposes intended by it. Instead of this we have, in the Church, the habitation of God through the Spirit to abide forever; the supernatural giving place to the moral and the spiritual.

The Spirit's baptism was wholly supernatural, and belonged to the childhood of the church; and it was invariably connected with the gift of tongues. This indeed was its chief design.

It was the baptism of spirit in Spirit, and the effects of it were felt and heard in the bestowment of new words and thoughts—the legitimate fruit of Spirit upon spirit, or true spiritual manifestations. The minds of the Apostles and those of the Gentiles referred to, were wholly brought under the influence of the Spirit, immersed into those influences, so that they thought and spoke, not of their own will, or by their own suggestion, but wholly under the will and suggestion of the Holy Spirit. This was the immersion

of spirit in the Holy Spirit—the grandest——sublimest act ever performed, and the results the most marvelous ever witnessed. It was a gift surpassing all that ever had been conferred, as it was the highest intellectual endowment ever bestowed. Other miracles took effect upon the bodies of men, or on brute matter; but this took effect upon mind—spirit; and gave immediate birth to new and unknown forms of speech in perfection; and to equally new and spiritual thoughts, "hidden from the sages and the learned" of all antiquity. Such as "eye had not seen nor ear heard, neither had entered into the heart of man to conceive," but which God had now "revealed" to the Apostles and others by his Spirit. (1 Cor. ii. 9.)

This act, the baptism of the Spirit, was not done by the Apostles in the name of Christ, as were the miracles subsequently; they, in fact, were the recipients of it, and had no control or agency in its bestowment.

It was not done by the Father as a direct act of his will, independent of the Messiah, but done with reference to the economical authority conferred upon him as "Lord and Christ."

It was not the free and unconstrained act of the Holy Spirit, operating "upon whom he will;" but Jesus having received the promise of the

Spirit from the Father, sent him down with all the splendid gifts he brought from the seat of empire—the throne of the Majesty in the heavens. It will be seen then how important was this baptism, and how necessary the gift of tongues which accompanied its administration.

Let us now proceed in the further development of the main subject of our argument. By reference to the commission as given to the Apostles, we learn that their field of labor was—the world—all nations—and every creature embraced in the human family, without exception or limitation. We will present to the reader an induction of this commission. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be *condemned*." (Mark xvi. 15, 16.) It is added: "And they went forth and preached *everywhere*, the *Lord working with* them and *confirming* the word with *signs* following." (v. 24.) Among these signs was the gift of tongues.

"Go ye therefore and teach (disciple) *all nations*, baptizing them in (into) the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Teaching them to observe all (the) things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo I am with

you alway, even unto the end of the world (age), Amen." (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.)

"Then opened he their understanding that they might understand the scriptures. And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved (the) Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name and among *all nations*, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things." (Luke xxiv. 45–48.)

"But ye shall receive *power*," (the power of the Spirit), "after that the Holy Spirit is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto (for) me, both in *Jerusalem and in all* Judea *and in Samaria*, and unto *the uttermost parts of the earth.*" (Acts i. 8.)

Thus the Apostles were to go throughout "the world"—"to all nations"—"everywhere," and preach the gospel to "every creature." And Luke, in the Acts, specifies in a summary way their field of labor—"in Jerusalem, in all Judea, in Samaria, and to the *uttermost* parts of the earth."

As Christianity then was for man—for the race, it was to be preached to all men, and preached by the Apostles. And this they did, and this no other men have ever done, and probably never will do.

"But I say, have they not heard? Yes, verily,

their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." (Rom. x. 18.) "The gospel, which is come unto you, as in all the world." "And be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven." (Col. i. 5, 6, 23.)

No commission was ever so large as this, and no difficulties were so formidable to encounter and overcome as then existed. Difficulties independent of all moral considerations, growing out of the ignorance of the Apostles, and their want of education, and the many languages into which the gospel was to be introduced—and introduced by them.

Nothing could have exceeded the rashness of such an enterprise, either on the part of the Saviour, who originated it, or his Apostles who were to execute it, as this. And that it would prove a failure without supernatural aid, such as we have spoken of, is absolutely certain. And yet neither the Saviour nor his Apostles had any misgivings in regard to the results. And the facts in the case fully prove the success of their mission. What more convincing argument is needed to establish the truth of the Christian religion!

Let us look at the extent of the Roman empire, and the field of operation, which lay before

these missionaries—the Apostles, and we shall form some idea of the magnitude of their work, and the difficulties they had to overcome in the prosecution of it. The Roman empire extended, in the Augustan age, from Scandinavia on the north to the Indian Ocean on the south; and from the Atlantic Ocean on the west to the Indian Ocean on the east—embracing Europe, Asia, Africa, and the islands of the seas. And yet there were distant portions of the globe unconquered by this colossal power. Our own continent and Australia were then unknown. The three great continents, with the islands of the seas contiguous to them, were all brought under the dominion of the Roman government. This then was the world over which the Apostles were to travel, and propagate the gospel of Christ.

The population of these quarters of the globe we cannot with absolute certainty give. But by instituting a comparison with the present census, in the different portions of the earth, we will arrive at some just conclusions with regard to it. At the present time, there is said to be a population of one thousand millions on the earth. We suppose that at least six hundred millions may be found in the older continents, perhaps eight hundred. Now it would not be too extravagant a calculation for us to say that there were existing

under the wings of the Roman eagles and other known and accessible portions of the world then, a population of six hundred millions. We do not suppose that all these were to be visited and each one to hear the gospel. But there was no limitation given to the commission under which the Apostles acted, and the world was before them. And if they could, and did successfully preach the word to any one of them, in a language in which they had been untaught, they could by the same means, and might have compassed the entire field; and this is sufficient for our argument.

It is now an ascertained fact, that there are more than three thousand different tongues and dialects spoken among the various tribes and nations of the earth. Suppose then, that there were but one thousand—five hundred—or even but one hundred; reduce it to the lowest possible number within the boundaries of truth and probability, and you will have the premises on which our argument is based. But as Asia has ever been the hive of nations, the languages spoken on that continent must have been very numerous.

We wish to state a few undeniable facts, as the basis of our plea. The Gospel within the first century of its existence was not only fully established, but successfully propagated throughout the known

world. In Jerusalem and all Judea, in Samaria and to the uttermost parts of the earth. We will give a schedule of the labors of Paul as found in the New Testament. He went to Damascus in Syria, in Arabia, Cæsarea, Antioch Silicia, Cyprus, Salamis, Paphos, Perga, Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe, Attalia, Neapolis, Philippi, Amphipolis, Apollonia, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth, Ephesus, Assos, Mytelene, Chios, Samos, Trogyllium, Melitus, Cos, Rhodes, Patara, Tyre, Ptolemais, Sidon, Crete, Phenicia, Melita, Syracuse, Rome, and Spain. He also says that "from Jerusalem round about unto Illyricum he had *fully* preached the Gospel of Christ." (Rom. xv. 19.)

In addition to which, we refer to the first discourse preached by the Apostle Peter and the eleven on the day of Pentecost. "Parthians, Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Lybia about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians," all heard in their "own tongues, the wonderful works of God." (Acts ii. 2–4.)

Peter sent his first Epistle to the "strangers, scattered throughout Pontus, Gallatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia." And John in the

Revelations, sent letters to the seven churches in Lesser Asia. To the church at Ephesus, in Smyrna, in Pergamos, in Thyatira, in Sardis, in Philadelphia, in Laodicea.

The Apostles were commanded by the Saviour to tarry in Jerusalem, until they should be endueed with power from on high. They obeyed this command, and did not attempt to preach the Gospel until they had thus been empowered with the requisite qualifications from "on high." On the day of Pentecost, being assembled in one place with the other disciples, about one hundred and twenty in all, "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues, like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts ii. 2–4.) By this power from on high, the Apostles were enabled to speak in a variety of foreign tongues which they had never learned; and to speak not only intelligibly, but to the conviction of their numerous hearers. And thus were they put in possession of a gift, by which they could go to all portions of the earth, and have ready access to the minds of men in their several languages in preaching the Gospel, and in

making any farther revelations to their converts, according to Christ's promise which may have been needed. Nothing could have exceeded this gift, and no other could have been given to have answered its purpose.

On this day—the commencement of the kingdom of Christ—there were Jews and proselytes from seventeen different portions of the earth, and speaking as many tongues and dialects, so that they all marveled that these Gallileans should have such resources of language and powers of utterance; and the result, as we know, was the conversion of three thousand persons on that day. This was one of the greatest achievements ever known before or since; and was a fit and suitable earnest and pledge of the success which should attend the labors of the Apostles everywhere, in carrying out the objects of their mission.

The converts in returning home formed the nucleus of many congregations, afterward visited by the Apostles, as in the city of Rome; so that even without their aid they would be able to propagate the Gospel of Christ by reproclaiming it, and telling of the wonders of the day of Pentecost and the effects produced in their own conversion. Thus the church at Rome was formed by the "Jews and proselytes,"—"strangers," who were present on the day of Pentecost, and

were numbered among the hearers and the converts. We have no evidence that any Apostle had ever visited Rome before Paul: and when he wrote his Epistle, "their faith had been spoken of throughout the whole world." It is evident that the original converts made by the Apostles, to some extent, were endowed with supernatural gifts, as directions are given to the saints at Rome for their proper exercise. Paul desired also to visit them that he might impart, perhaps to the disciples made by the first converts, some "spiritual gift," or it may be some gift not hitherto possessed. (Rom. i. 11; chap. xii.)

It will be remembered that the Apostles chiefly confined their labors to the towns and cities. These were populous, and as now, were great places of resort. Paul tarried in Ephesus upward of two years: "so that all they who were in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks," (Hellenists.) Ephesus was the seat of the idolatrous worship in Asia; the temple of Diana was situated there, at whose shrine "all Asia and the world worshiped." Here then, as in other cities, the Apostles would have access to the different tribes and nations of the earth; and without extending their travels over large districts and visiting all persons and families, they would gain an audience in all lan-

guages. (Acts xix. 8–10.) And thus, by economizing both time and labor, they propagated over extensive fields the Gospel of Christ.

Most of the Epistles were sent to churches in large cities; and the gift of tongues formed a prominent part in the supernatural appendages of the Gospel, inasmuch as there was constant use for its exercise for the instruction of those who were in the church and for the conversion of "barbarians." (1 Cor. xiv.)

Testimonies in favor of all the great facts of the Gospel history and the establishment and rapid spread of Christianity are abundant; though doubtless, many of the early records, which would furnish additional evidence on these questions, have perished. But sufficient remains, both as furnished by friends and foes, to enable us to make just and satisfactory conclusions in regard to them.

That Jesus lived in the reign of Tiberius, Emperor of Rome, and that he suffered death under Pontius Pilate, the Roman procurator in Judea, are facts alike corroborated by Jews and Christians; the latter of whom have commemorated the facts of his death, resurrection, and ascension from the day of the establishment of Christianity, to the present time. The Lord's Day, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, have

been observed from the commencement of Christianity to our own day.

The genuineness of the Books of the New Testament is unquestionable. They have been quoted or alluded to by a series of Christian writers, as well as by adversaries of the Christian faith. They may be traced back in regular succession from the present time to the apostolic age. Barnabas, the fellow-laborer of Paul; Clement, Bishop of Rome, and a fellow-laborer of Paul; Hermas, his contemporary and co-laborer; Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, A. D. 70; Polycarp, a disciple of John the Apostle, Bishop of Smyrna, have all spoken of the great events and facts of the New Testament, and were extensively engaged in the propagation of the Christian religion. Among the fathers of the church we find some in distant and remote portions of the world. At Rome, at Antioch, at Smyrna, in Syria, in France, at Athens, at Carthage, at Hippo—the two latter places in Africa. And in all these places there were numerous Christians and churches to be found; and so long had they existed, that councils were held, even in Africa, represented by bishops and other dignitaries from large districts, indicating that they had long existed, and had become very numerous.

Of Celsus and Porphry, two powerful ene-

mies of the Christian religion, Chrysostom remarks with equal force and justice that they were "powerful witnesses for the antiquity of the New Testament, since they could not have argued against the tenets of the Gospel, if it had not existed in that early period." All the great facts of the Gospel history they have acknowledged; Porphry also, had conversed with Christians in Tyre, in Sicily, and in Rome. Julian the Apostate did not deny the truth of the Gospel history as a question of fact; he acknowledged the principal items of the Christian faith, as well as the miracles of Christ and the Apostles, and also at a time when, both in Italy and Greece, numerous converts were to be found to the Christian religion.

"By rejecting the Gospel, persons are compelled to maintain, in opposition to positive credible testimony, that extensive important events have taken place without an adequate cause. They must maintain the reality of miracles greater than Christians believe, and which accord neither with the nature of God nor the condition of man, but which involve absurdities, contradictions, and impossibilities."

The testimony of Tacitus, corroborated as it is by cotemporary writers, may be thus summed up :—

1. That Jesus Christ was put to death as a malefactor by Pontius Pilate, procurator under Tiberius.

2. That from Christ, the people called Christians derived their name and sentiments.

3. That this religion, or "superstition" (as he calls it), had its rise in Judea, where it also spread, notwithstanding the ignominious death of its founder, and the opposition which his followers afterward experienced from the people of that country.

4. That it was propagated from Judea into other parts of the world, as far as Rome; where in the tenth or eleventh year of Nero, and before that time, the Christians were very numerous. His language is *ingens multitudo*—a *vast multitude.*

5. That the professors of this religion were reproached and hated, and underwent many and grievous sufferings.

Pliny the Younger, in his famous letter to Trajan, A. D. 107, thus in part writes: "Suspending therefore all judicial proceedings, I have recourse to you for advice; for it has appeared to me a matter highly deserving consideration, especially on account of the *great number* of persons who are in danger of suffering; for many of all ages and every rank, of both sexes

likewise, are accused and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of their superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also and the open country."

Now Pliny was lieutenant and proprætor, with proconsular power, under Trajan, in the provinces of Pontus and Bithynia, both of which are spoken of by Peter, in his first epistle, as countries in which Christians were known, and to whom in part he addressed his first general epistle. They were both provinces of the Roman empire, and situated in Asia Minor, near the Euxine Sea. In these remote countries, at the close of the first and commencement of the second centuries, according to the testimony of Pliny, corroborated by Peter, great multitudes of Christians were to be found. So many as to arrest the judicial proceedings instituted against them by the Roman authorities, inasmuch as there were so many of all ages, sexes, and conditions in danger of suffering,—not "in the towns and cities only, but in the open country."

Scarcely two months had elapsed after the death of Christ, when his Apostles suddenly presented themselves and publicly taught in Jerusalem, where their doctrine spread throughout Judea and the neighboring provinces. Shortly after it was carried into Greece, Italy, and Spain.

Churches were founded in the cities of Cæsarea, Rome, Athens, Corinth, Thessalonica, Philippi, Antioch, Ephesus, and in many other regions, towns, and cities; so that (as heathen adversaries, together with Christian writers, acknowledge) before three centuries were completed, and indeed at the conclusion of the first, the Gospel had penetrated into every region of the then known world, and far beyond the boundaries of the Roman empire.

The letter of Adrian deserves especial notice. He was the husband of Paulina, the emperor's sister, and was consul A. D. 134, and had been some time in Egypt. Afterward, in Syria, he wrote to his brother-in-law, in the year 134. He thus writes: "The worshipers of Serapis are Christians, and they are devoted to Serapis who call themselves Christians; and they are devoted to Serapis who call themselves Christ's bishops. There is no ruler of the Jewish synagogue, no Samaritan, no mathematician, no soothsayer, no anointer; even the Patriarch, if he should come to Egypt, would be required to worship Serapis, by others, Christ—a seditious and turbulent people. However, the city is rich and populous. Nor are any idle. Some are employed in making glass; others, paper; others, in weaving linen. They have one God. Him the Christians—Him

the Jews—Him the Gentile people worship." Passing by the confused account that Adrian gives of the population and manners of the people of Egypt, it is evident, from this letter, that Christians were numerous at Alexandria and other parts of Egypt, when Adrian was in that country.

Eusebius says, that in the reign of Adrian, "The Christian religion shone out in the eyes of all men."

Thus in proconsular Asia and Egypt, churches and Christians were numerous in the days of Adrian. A single age from the very lifetime of the Messiah, and soon after the death of John the Apostle, they had their bishops and deacons, and had formed themselves into large and powerful communities. And it must have taken much time to have accomplished this.

Indeed, we have the testimony of Jews and Gentiles, friends and foes,—among them Josephus, the Mishna, Tacitus, Suetonius, Pliny, Trajan, Adrian, the two Antonines, and Lucian, together with a host of Christian apologists and martyrs,—that all sorts of people—Jews, pagans, barbarians, bond and free—confessed their faith in Christ, and were numbered among the saved, in the first and second centuries of the Christian era.

As early as the tenth year of Nero's reign,

about thirty years after the crucifixion of the Messiah, Tacitus speaks of the "multitude" of Christians discovered even in the midst of the most grievous and bloody persecutions to which they were subjected, under the reign of that emperor. From these and similar testimonies, it will appear that the Gospel, in the first ages of its announcement, was extensively propagated, and that too among far and distant nations.

From the records to which we already have appealed, both of friends and foes, not only were Christians to be numbered by myriads, and churches in towns and cities to be found, but also in villages and throughout the open country. Pliny declares in the century following the first age of the church, that he found the temples in Achaia almost deserted, in consequence of the progress of Christianity. And Tertullian subsequently declares that "if the Christians were to withdraw, whole cities and provinces would be depopulated." The various people in Getulia, the countries of the Moors; all the borders of Spain; the different nations of Gaul, and those parts of Britain which the Romans could not reach: the Sarmatiæ, with the Dacii, the Germans and the Scythians, were brought under the influence of the Gospel of Christ. From the limited knowledge we have of the early ages of

the Christian Church, we cannot state with certainty how many of these different tribes were visited by the Apostles, and to what extent they propagated the Gospel in their day; but sufficient has already been given to assure us, that numerous countries, speaking different languages, received the Gospel from their hands; and the universal prevalence of Christianity, as noted by subsequent and cotemporary writers,—friends and foes,—indicate that the churches planted, must have been of long standing; and the demolition of Polytheism, in a short time after its introduction, proves that the success of the Gospel was a fixed and acknowledged fact

PROPOSITION.

The rapid and certain spread of the Gospel among all nations by the labors of the Apostles, is a demonstration for the truth of Christianity.

We have seen that the first gift bestowed upon the Apostles was the gift of tongues; and that in the exercise of this gift on the day of Pentecost, persons from seventeen different portions of the globe, and speaking as many languages, heard in their own vernacular the Gospel of Christ, and were saved by the belief and obedience of it.

We cannot too much admire the wisdom and

foresight of the author of the Christian system in the bestowment of this gift. We doubt if any one, not possessed of Divine prescience, as was the Saviour,—for in him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,—could have conceived of such an element of power for the accomplishment of so stupendous a work. The Apostles did not anticipate it, and probably were as much confounded by these new and brilliant gifts, as those who witnessed them. And that Jesus of Nazareth—if he were only a man—could have suggested such a method of carrying out such designs, much less to have accomplished it is beyond all belief!

This then, was the primal gift—a gift without which even the first discourse could not have been preached to the motley crowd assembled on the Pentecost! How wise, how admirable, how orderly the bestowment of this gift! It is perfectly in harmony with all that Jesus did whilst on earth. If the Apostles had been left to their own ingenuity and wisdom, they never would have thought of it: and if they had, all attempts to exercise it unaided from on high, would have proved a failure; and if the united wisdom of the world had been consulted, no greater power than this could have been demanded. No gift could have been bestowed so free from imposture, both with respect to those exercising it and those who were

the witnesses of it. If the Apostles, without this power, should have attempted it, they would have been conscious of their own hypocrisy and deception; or if laboring under any hallucination of mind or perversity of will, it would at once have been detected. No more hazardous attempt could have been made, provided the Apostles had been impostors, than this, as it would have resulted in confusion and defeat. But the results show that there was no trick, no delusion, and no failure; thousands on the day of Pentecost, and subsequently, were converted by the efforts of the Gallileans, and those efforts chiefly resulted from the exercise of this gift!

The one language at the Tower of Babel, in consequence of the loss of the true religion and the impiety of the race, was lost, and the effect of this was the disunion and separation of men as seen in their subsequent history; and now, "in the fullness of the time," when a new religion for the race was about to be introduced, the object of which was to unite all men by a common faith, into one universal brotherhood, the gift of tongues was conferred upon the Apostles of this religion, and on many of their converts; a common vehicle of thought and intercommunion was thus opened. When the race apostatized, and their condition morally and religiously be-

came hopeless, they lost the common language which was spoken; and now, when God was about to reconcile the world unto himself through his Son, and by the same act to reconcile Jews and Gentiles to each other; and out of the midst of an alienated world, "hateful and hating one another," to form one harmonious and happy family, in restoring a common language to the Apostles of this new religion, speech was restored. The curse of Babel, if not removed, at least met with a divine compensation in the gift of tongues. A universal currency of thought was thus struck from the infinite mind of "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation," and put into the hands of the Apostles for the benefit of the world, having on it the name and the superscription of the reigning Monarch of the world—"Jesus, the Messiah." This was bringing order out of confusion, light out of darkness, a common language out of Babelism, and with it a new religion from the heavens! It was the highest, noblest gift of an intellectual character ever bestowed—one naturally the most difficult to obtain, and never to any perfection, but by the labors of a lifetime. This has been felt by all who have acquired an extensive knowledge of their own and foreign languages. The Apostles not only spoke in one but in all languages, and that

too with precision and effect. Not the commonplace thoughts of others, but new, original, spiritual, sublime thoughts, such as hitherto had not entered into the heart of man to conceive. This was the consummation of Divine wisdom. It was the primal Light of the new creation. It was the "Let there be light, and light was." It was the spiritual affluence from on high poured out upon the darkened intellect of the light-bearers of the world. It was God who shined into the hearts of the Apostles, as he of old shined into the material orbs at the genesis of the old creation. It was the sign and token of a presence and a power that no angel, demon, or man could have similated! How true is it that God alone "does wondrous things!" and this was one of them. Not wonderful to him, or for him to do, but wonderful to us, as it was to those who first witnessed it. God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all; and he has but to reveal his face, and darkness, and ignorance, and impotence at once vanish.

But in connection with the Apostles, many of their converts received this extraordinary gift to a considerable extent, both in speaking and in interpreting what was spoken and written. This is evident from an examination of the apostolic letters addressed to the churches.

On the necessity for this gift, it has been said, with great propriety, that "The doctrine of the gospel being entirely different from all the ideas which the heathen had been accustomed to entertain on religious subjects, any interpretation of what was delivered by the Spirit in a foreign language, made without a supernatural direction, might have led the church into error. Further, the faculty of interpreting foreign languages by inspiration was, in another respect, a gift very necessary in the first age. For the books of the Old Testament being written in Hebrew, a language not then understood by the vulgar even in Judea, and the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists being all written in the Greek tongue, on account of its emphasis and precision, and that tongue being nowhere spoken by the common people, except in Greece and some cities in Lesser Asia—if there had not been in every church inspired interpreters, who could translate these divinely inspired writings into the common languages, they would have been in a great measure useless, especially at the beginning, when the knowledge of them was most wanted. Whereas, every church having inspired interpreters of foreign languages commonly present in their religious assemblies, to translate the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures into the language of the country—

the common people everywhere had an opportunity of deriving from these writings, all the knowledge and comfort, they are fitted to yield."

There was a divinely inspired class of interpreters in the Apostolic church, called "helpers," whose duty it was, for the edification of the church, to translate the foreign tongues into the vernacular languages spoken by the common people, that all alike might be instructed and comforted. It will be remembered that these assemblies in the cities were composed of persons speaking a variety of languages; and without such supernatural aid they would have remained in ignorance of the inspired truths communicated by those who were gifted with foreign tongues. It does not appear that these interpreters were needed by the Apostles in publishing the Gospel, as they could speak in all languages without the aid of interpreters; but in the church, the members for their mutual edification had this gift bestowed upon them.

The Epistles direct those who were emulous to speak in foreign tongues in the church, that unless they could interpret, or had some one to aid them in this work, they should keep silent; for "God is not the author of confusion but of order in all the churches." He urges them to seek the gift of interpretation, if they would speak in

foreign tongues. In this way, they would "excell to the edifying of the church." He directs "him that speaketh in an unknown tongue, to pray that he may interpret." "For greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues, except he interpret, that the church may receive edifying." (1 Cor. xiv. 5.) Prophesying here, evidently means teaching.

These directions show that the Apostle urges his Corinthian brethren, to pray that they may interpret, in the church, what they may speak in a foreign tongue.

The presumption is, that the speaker in the church silently interpreted from the foreign tongue into the language of the common people, and then audibly communicated it. This was a mental process; and just as a man speaking now two languages will think in the one with which he is most familiar, and then speak in the one which at the time being is needed, so of these gifted men. Thus an Englishman, speaking in the German or any other language, will think in his own language, and interpret it into the foreign oue, and then give utterance to his thoughts in that tongue.

But in case the speaker in a foreign language could not interpret, and had no "helper" in the difficult process, he was to keep silence. "If

there be no interpreter let him keep silence in the church, and let him speak to himself and to God." (1 Cor. xiv. 28.)

All persons who have undertaken the ordinary work of translation, know the difficulty there is in giving the idiomatic phrases of any language literally in another, so as to give the idea and spirit of the author as clearly and faithfully as he himself had uttered them; and therefore the need in the apostolic churches for this class of men, inasmuch as the Christian religion employed new words to give expression to new ideas, conformed to the idioms of all the languages in which it was originally spoken. It will appear then, that the work of interpreting or translating into all languages, so as to express infallibly the mind of the Spirit, was as manifest a gift as the speaking in foreign tongues itself.

In order to show the nature of this work, namely, that of translating, and the difficulties in the way of effecting it with harmony and precision, we call attention, by way of illustration, to the ordinary process. It will appear that no labor is so great, requiring more skill and learning than this; and therefore the ablest and profoundest scholars have alone succeeded in it. And after the utmost effort to reach perfection, there have always been, and will be, many fail-

ures. The structure of no two languages is alike, and the idiomatic phrases differ so widely, that it is almost impossible to adapt the one to the other. Not unfrequently a too literal translation will be as unlike the original, as the dry and withered mummy is to the living man.

The translation of the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures into the Latin Vulgate, was the work of an ordinary lifetime, as the facilities to accomplish the design were not so great then as now.

Wickliffe devoted the best portion of his life to the business of translating the New Testament into the English tongue.

King James' Bible, now in use, was the result of the united labors of forty-seven persons. It was commenced under the auspices of the king, and every possible aid was afforded in the accomplishment of the work, and yet it took many years to effect it; and it was not considered in that age perfect, and was received with much caution and distrust, and not without great opposition. The work began in 1607, and was finished and published in 1611; and this was simply a revision, not an original translation. McKnight spent many years on the Epistles in his translation from the Greek; and Dr. George Campbell devoted thirty years of his life on the four Gospels. These men had learning and leisure, and

all the facilities at hand for the accomplishment of their task, but neither of them considered his work perfect.

The American Bible Union, proceeding with great caution, and governed by the most exact and precise rules, have been engaged in the work of revision for three or four years, and have only laid the foundation for their future labors.

The work of translation and revision is one of great labor, requiring not only much time, but all requisite qualifications and resources; and yet the Apostles were the best translators the world ever saw—and their work was so perfect that it needs no revision; instead of this, it has summoned the labor of ages to translate the original documents they have left; and they have laid under contribution the learning of the world to accomplish the work.

Notwithstanding these difficulties in the way of speaking and interpreting foreign languages, the Apostles established churches throughout the world, during their personal labors, of which no one can deny. Not only do we refer to the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles in proof of this, but to the writings of the fathers, the concessions of their enemies who lived cotemporary with them, to the "History of the Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire" by Gibbon, and to the ecclesi-

astic histories of Mosheim, Neander, and others. The Greek Church in the eastern part of the Roman empire, and the Catholic Church in the western—the Paulicians, the Nestorians, and the Waldenses, all bear witness to the fact.

Indeed, Christianity can be traced back in one unbroken line from the present day, to the times of the Apostles. It is a river whose headwaters are to be found in the twelve Apostles on Mount Zion, and which has run through Asia, Africa, and Europe, and reached our own country, spreading peace and prosperity wherever it has gone, and leaving the monuments of its divine origin on all its banks.

THREE PROPOSITIONS.

We shall now state three propositions; and would say to our readers, that one of them, from a consideration of the facts already adduced, must be true.

1st. Either the Apostles must have been the most learned and best educated men in the languages the world ever saw before they undertook their mission; or,

2d. They must have been accompanied and assisted in their mission by the most thoroughly learned men the world has ever known; or,

3d. They were supernaturally endowed with the gift of tongues.

It will at once be admitted, that if the last of these propositions is true,—then Christianity is from God,—it must be divine.

There is no escape from the conclusions to which these propositions lead, and we now invite your special attention to them.

And First—the learning of the Apostles. But little need be said on this head, as but few, if any, will contend for it. In the absence of all counter testimony, it must be admitted that they, in point of education, were extremely illiterate. Our Saviour chose them from the humblest walks of life; and chose them because they belonged to the common people. He calls them "babes" in comparison with the sages and the learned of antiquity. One of them was a tax-gatherer, and the balance of the original twelve were fishermen,—and all of them Gallileans—for "their speech betrayed them." Like their master, they enjoyed no advantages from the rabbis or the schools, but were plain, honest, and unlettered men. Besides they were full-grown men when they became his disciples, and unused to study, and had neither time, disposition, means, or previous qualifications to make any attainments in literature,—especially in language,—

the most difficult of all attainments to those who have not had some previous taste for its pursuit, and who in early life have not been schooled in its acquisition. Indeed, they could not speak well their own language, and would have been put to shame before an enlightened audience of their own countrymen, if thrown simply upon their natural or acquired resources. How could it have been otherwise? Oratory at best is a rare endowment, and but few with all the advantages of education attain it. But to suppose that men taken from the office of tax-gatherers, and from their fishing-tackle, whose employment demanded but a feeble vocabulary, and whose associations in life were among the lowest classes, could in a day mount up to the highest eminence as logicians and orators, is beyond all belief. And yet no man ever wielded such power over public audiences as the Apostles; and no specimens of eloquence can equal theirs. And as to the effects produced—the history of the world is their witness! None such were ever known.

The fewest of men can speak well in two or more languages. All who have tried it, find serious difficulties in their way, and have given the preference of one language over that of another. They may speak with ease and effect in one, but hesitate and stammer in two lan-

guages. Take a German or Frenchman, if he has learned our language after he has reached maturity, he will never be able to dispossess himself of the provincialisms and idioms of his own tongue, or speak with equal freedom in ours.

The very muscles of the face, and other organs connected with speech, become so fixed and rigid, that they give to the different nations of the earth, in a great measure, their physiognomical peculiarities. More depends on this, for the difference in the characteristic expression of the face, than is generally supposed. And this discipline of the organs of speech presents insuperable difficulties in the way of articulating freely in a foreign language, not having employed the muscles and other parts of the organs of speech necessary to give a free, full, and perfect utterance to the sounds expressed in that language; and the difficulty of speaking it with ease and perfection have always been felt. But this difficulty was overcome by the Apostles; no complaint in regard to the manner of their oratory was made. The Apostle Paul refers to the charge made against him by his enemies, that his "speech was contemptible." But this was the language of jealousy or of malice; or it may have referred to the want of finished rhetoric, after the Grecian models, which the Apostle dis-

dained, lest the faith of the converts might rest "in the wisdom of men rather than in the power of God."

It is the work of a lifetime to learn to speak well in one's own vernacular, and few ever reach it. Look at the labors of Demosthenes and Cicero; of William Pitt and Burke; of Clay and Webster; and yet there were elements of power, as orators, they never reached, or could reach.

Of all the efforts of the human mind this is the most difficult, and when attained, the grandest. No intricacies of machinery are so occult, no achievements of art so great, as the interweaving and construction of an effective speech. There are a thousand things to be taken into the account, and all are necessary to reach the result.

A speaker arises, and does not know the first word he shall utter, much less the first sentence. He opens his mouth and the word is there; he speaks it, and another is at hand; a sentence is spoken, and another is ready, to be born out of his prolific brain. And these may all be uttered with reference to something yet before him, and the whole speech is to elaborate a single proposition, or reach some grand conclusions And all this is to be done within the space of an hour, under the embarrassment consequent upon the

presence of an audience,—mortifying slips of memory,—scarcity of language and of matter; and ten thousand accidents, only known to him who undertakes it. It is no wonder that there are so few who are able to accomplish this; the greater wonder is, that any one should do it at all.

Even men of letters have been found deficient in conversation. Corneille, whose genius resembled that of Shakspeare, and who so forcibly expresses his sentiments in writing, was insipid in conversation. He could not even speak that language of which he was so great a master with his pen.

The deficiencies of Addison are well known. He preserved a rigid silence among strangers—the silence of meditation, having no gift of conversation.

"La Fontaine," says La Bruyere, "appeared coarse, heavy, and stupid: he could not speak or describe what he had just seen;" and yet what freedom with the pen.

Isocrates, so celebrated for his beautiful oratorical compositions, "was so timid that he never ventured to speak in public." He could furnish speeches for others, but he could not use them to any effect himself.

Dryden said of himself, "My conversation is

slow and dull, my humor saturnine and reserved In short, I am none of those who endeavor to break jests in company, or make repartees." And the reason doubtless was, his utter inability to do it.

Of Elihu Burrit, it is said, that he can read some forty or fifty different languages. He is quite a prodigy in the art. But he has never acquired much fame as a public speaker. Though he has reached some eminence, yet no one ranks him among our best and most popular orators; and though he may acquire a new language in a few months by the aid of his previous studies, and read with ease and profit many of the dead and living languages, yet he would not be able to stand before a learned assembly of Frenchmen or Germans, and deliver an extempore address with the same ease and fluency, as before an English audience. It is one thing to learn a language so as to read it, and quite a different thing to have at command the ready coin to use as occasion may require. Searching into the lexicon may do for the study, but it will not answer for the forum or the pulpit. The bullion may be in the mint, but the coin is needed for circulation.

We will venture here to say that if the Apostles at their time of life, had by dint of study learned

the Greek language, or the Latin, so as to have read Demosthenes and Cicero, they could not have constructed a speech of ten minutes length, that would have been listened to in these languages either in Athens or in Rome.

It is therefore incredible that these men by education simply, should have spoken intelligibly any language but their own, and their resources must have been exceedingly limited even in that. But we will dismiss this postulate, as it cannot be for a moment defended. No one will say, in the ordinary sense of the term, the Apostles were learned men.

But SECONDLY, could not the Apostles have had interpreters—men properly educated—who might have translated the one language in which they spoke, into all the languages in which Christianity was propagated. And was not this the method adopted by them, both for its introduction and propagation? Let us candidly examine this postulate, and see if it will stand the test, and serve as a basis for the argument designed to be built upon it.

We readily admit that if it can be shown indubitably, that the Apostles had a corps of interpreters at command, and who translated their vernacular speech into all the languages in which Christianity was sent, it would go far to weaken

our confidence in the supernatural evidence for its truth; and therefore we shall carefully examine the ground of this assumption.

And, first, there is no evidence to be found in the Sacred Writings that any such corps of interpreters were associated with the Apostles; or that at any time even, they were needed by them. Neither in profane or sacred history have we any intimations of the fact. In all their conversations and speeches, they were thrown upon their own resources, and never in one single instance did they summon to their aid an interpreter. It must be remembered also, that much of the labors of the Apostles was carried on by familiar conversation.

That there were interpreters found in the churches among the disciples, is true: but this was a "gift," equally with that of "tongues," conferred upon them by the Apostles, in the name of Christ. But these interpreters aided the ordinary Christians in their social teachings in their mixed assemblies, and also for the instruction and conviction of unbelievers who came among them. But in no instance were these ever employed by the Apostle, to aid them in their appropriate work

This gift among Christians served a different purpose. Hear what an Apostle has said on

this subject: "There are it may be so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification. Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian; and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me." "If any speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God." (1 Cor. xiv. 10, 11; 27, 28.)

Thus the use of tongues in the church was not for display, to nourish spiritual pride. The exercise of the gift was inhibited, unless an interpreter should be present. Even the "Spirit of the prophets was subject to the prophets." They could give utterance to the thoughts revealed to them or not, as prudence dictated.

Again; the expense of such a body of men as professional interpreters would have been enormous. How could the Apostles have borne it? What means had they, or resources in the way of money, or wealth to draw upon, in aid of such a work? Peter and John in the portico of Solomon's temple said, "Silver and gold we have none," when a beggar asked of them alms. And Paul when speaking of himself and fellow-

laborers—the Apostles, says, "As poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. vi. 10.) If they had needed such aids in the work of propagating the Gospel in all languages, and if it was possible to obtain suitable persons to assist in the work, it is evident from the poverty of the twelve Apostles, and from that of Paul the Apostle, that the expense of such an appendage could not have been borne. Besides, it must be remembered, that in anticipation of all such help, the Gospel was to be preached in new fields, and to new tribes, and to the very men from whom the Apostles subsequently received aid in its further propagation. If they received assistance in the way of money or goods as they certainly did from the congregations they planted, where did they obtain the necessary aid in planting them? We can readily see how the shepherd could feed from the flock he owned; but the question most difficult to be settled is, how he obtained the flock without any means at all! Like other preachers, the Apostles in that day, "went forth, taking nothing from the gentiles." (3 John 7.)

It must be remembered that the world was before the Apostles; they had to break up the fallow ground, to plow and plant and to wait for the harvest, before they could, as husbandmen,

eat the fruit of their labor. How was it possible then for these men, to command the means requisite to sustain so expensive a work, of hiring interpreters, to an unlimited extent, to aid them in their labors?

It must also be borne in mind that there were not then to be found such facilities for the acquisition of knowledge as now. Schools of learning were few, and devoted more to philosophy than language. It was not the period for the printing press, or the telegraph, and for the universal diffusion of knowledge by the means and appliances of the present age. The world was sunk in barbarism, and enveloped in darkness.

But there are insuperable difficulties in the way of such a theory as we are now considering, we shall only simply refer to them. The Apostles, to find an interpreter, would be compelled to speak in the language he used, and this would presuppose their superior and unexampled erudition. They would be obliged to find interpreters who could not only speak their own vernacular, but that of the Apostles; or how could they have any free interchange of speech?

The Apostles would be compelled to make converts of them before their services could be secured, or if secured, would prove available

But how could they reach them in the absence of a common language? How would the Apostles have access to their minds, if they could not address them in a language they understood?

Besides, the words of the Spirit are peculiar to the spiritual nature of the Christian religion, just as chemistry and the arts have a language of their own; and until initiated, it would be impossible to give a full expression of all the nice shades of thought, and sublime utterances of the Spirit of wisdom, of glory, and of God.

We now proceed to the examination of the THIRD proposition, viz: That the Apostles were supernaturally endowed.

1. That they overrun the Roman empire is most certain, as we already have seen; and as this work could not have been accomplished by ordinary methods, or by natural means, we are shut up to the necessity of believing that it must have been done by the use of those divine and supernal powers which alone can account for the success consequent upon the labors of the Apostles.

Many ambitious men have conceived the idea, and some have undertaken the task, of conquering the world. The Apostles have been the only persons who realized the idea and did the work; not with carnal weapons, but with the

sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Not by might or by power of earthly origin, but by the aid of truth and testimony, demonstrated by the signs and wonders from heaven which attended their mission. It was not by sinew and bone, but with tongues of fire; not by an arm of flesh, but by the arm of Omnipotence. It was not the bodies of men, but their spirits they subdued, by the overwhelming power of the great facts and potent arguments they wielded. It was a bloodless conquest, so far as their enemies were concerned; and it gave the conquered the possession of a kingdom—a kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. It was like the stone of Daniel, cut out of the mountain without hands, and filling the whole earth; or like the grain of mustard seed of the parable, becoming a great tree, under whose shadow the nations might take shelter. It was not Jacob threshing the mountains, but the God of Jacob, tossing them from their firm foundations, and casting them into the sea. The hills were leveled and the valleys exalted, and a highway cast up which swept the globe. It was not the three hundred holding the difficult passage of the Thermopylæ, but the twelve holding in check the world which they conquered. History illuminates its pages with the renowned acts of its

heroes and statesmen, and we delight to do them honor; but the brightest of all celebrates the achievements of the Gallilean fishermen. These have "won eternal fame." Their work, according to the promise of their leader, "remains," and will forever remain.

The Apostle speaks of the success attending the preaching of the Gospel as a part of the "mystery of godliness." "God was manifested in the flesh, justified by the Spirit, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, *believed on by the world.*" Truly, this was a mystery—a secret, only now revealed. No such occurrence had ever before happened. How strong was this in proof of the resurrection of the Messiah, of the descent of the Holy Spirit, and of the supernatural gifts bestowed on the Apostles.

To believe that not only barbarians, Scythians, bond and free—the elegant Greeks and the warlike Romans, would forsake their native religion, the gods of their idolatry, and the corruption of the world, and believe in a religion that sought the overthrow of all others, and reformed the lives of men from the habits and principles of a most corrupt age,—to believe this could be done by the mere force words, or the power of oratory, without supernatural aid, is to attempt to account for a most extraordinary effect in the absence of

a competent cause, and to believe in a greater miracle than any recorded in the Scriptures of truth.

That the Apostles were successful in establishing churches and propagating Christianity in far and distant fields, and among people speaking a great variety of languages, we have already seen. How could this have been effected on any known principles of an ordinary character? The history of missions in pagan lands in our own day, with all the means at our command, with the superior light of the present century, with the aid of learning, the labors of the press, with Bible translations, with the facilities of travel and the persevering efforts of the benevolent and charitable at home, and the self-sacrificing efforts of missionaries abroad,—all show how difficult is the task, how slow the progress, and how few the converts that have been made. Let the success of missions in Burmah, in Africa, in China, in the islands of the seas, and among the Indians in our own land, testify to the formidable difficulties in the way of prosecuting this heaven-inspired work. With the Bible translated into more than two hundred different languages, with hundreds of missionaries and the press at their command, with the prayers and the co-operation of hundreds of thousands of Christians at home,

the Gospel has met with but feeble success in pagan lands, and its genuine fruits may well be questioned in thousands of instances, both at home and abroad. A single discourse on the day of Pentecost, by the Apostle Peter, made more real converts to Christianity than the united labors of the Christian world in pagan lands within a quarter of a century in the present age.

During the apostolic age, the Gospel had its converts from Judea to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Whilst the *Acta Pilata*, as referred to by Tertullian, affords the most indubitable evidence of the fact of our Saviour's life and mission, his sufferings and death, and the existence of the Christian sect which he originated, all of which he communicated to the Roman senate; being procurator of Judea and a Roman governor, it was his duty to make known the remarkable events which occurred under his administration to the power that sent him. And whilst the testimony of Suetonius, a Roman historian, who flourished under the reign of Trajan, A. D. 116, which declares that "Claudius Cæsar banished the Jews from Rome, because they raised continued tumults, instigated by Christ," or rather by Christians. And Celsus, the bitterest enemy of Christianity, who wrote in the latter end of

the second century speaks of "Jesus as the founder of Christianity, as having lived a short time from his day," and witnesses the principal facts of his history, copies largely from the books of the New Testament, and speaks of them by the names which they now bear; and Porphry, and Julian the Apostate, confirm the same; whilst Tacitus, the Roman historian, gives in substance the following testimony:

"That Jesus Christ was put to death as a malefactor, by Pontius Pilate, procurator under Tiberius. That from Christ, the people called Christians derived their name. That this religion ('superstition') had its rise in Judea, whence it spread, notwithstanding the ignominious death of its founder and the opposition which his followers met. That it was propagated from Judea into other parts of the world, as far as Rome: when, in the tenth year of Nero, they, the Christians, were very numerous. That its professors were reproached, hated, and underwent grievous persecutions." And that Gibbon, on this testimony of Tacitus, has the candor to remark, that "the most sceptical criticism is obliged to respect the truth of this extraordinary fact, (the persecution of the Christians under Nero), and the integrity of this celebrated passage."

"Its truth," he adds, "is confirmed by the diligent aud accurate Suetonius, who mentions the punishment which Nero inflicted upon the Christians." And it may be proved "by the consent of the most ancient manuscripts, by the inimitable character of Tacitus, by his reputation, which guarded the text from interpolations of pious fraud; and by the purport of his narrative."

Whilst we have the united and concurrent testimony of friends and foes, for the early and rapid spread of Christianity—of Tacitus and Pliny, of Celsus and Julian, of Justin Martyr and Tertullian, of Origen and Jerome, and a host of others, the facts which they give us only corroborates the statements incidentally found in the writings of the Apostles and Evangelists of the New Testament, to which already we have referred.

Surely no proof can be wanting to establish all the assumptions we have made in regard to the truth of Christianity; and no testimony can be less free from suspicion than what has been adduced on all the premises found in this argument.

How false is the assertion, that all our witnesses are among our friends, and therefore should not be trusted. If indeed this were true, no men have ever given better evidence of their

integrity and faithfulness, and of their competency in relating matters of fact, of which they were eye and ear witnesses. Many of them sealed this testimony with their blood. They were not martyrs to an opinion, an idle speculation, to a refined philosophical theory, but to matters of fact, which fell under their personal observation.

The extent of the Roman empire we have already seen, reaching from the Atlantic on the west, to the Euphrates on the east; and from the Rhine and the Danube on the north, to the deserts of Arabia and Africa, on the south. With the exception of Great Britain, soon after subdued by Agricola, the interior of Africa, and the hardy barbarians of northern Europe, her proud eagles had become the standard of the world.

The universal sovereignty of Rome was a fit symbol of the triumphant march of the New Empire of the Anointed Lord of the Universe.

The Gospel beginning in Palestine, spread throughout Asia, was carried into Italy, Spain, Arabia, and Africa, and the islands of the seas, and amid all the barbarous and babelized tongues of the earth ; and that, too, by the labors of the Gallilean fishermen and Paul the Apostle of the Gentiles. The Apostles, under their unlimited commission, preached the Gospel to the world,

and in all languages to which they had access, and among all people wherever they went. If they had expressed themselves improperly or inelegantly, in bad grammar, bad accent, bad idiom, rudely, stammeringly, and with hesitation, they would have been suspected of fraud, and their labors would have proved abortive. The gift of tongues, to accomplish these results, was inevitable; and whilst it revealed the wisdom of its Author, it gave universality to that religion which was designed for the world. In vain may we object to miracles: the results of the efforts of the Apostles were the greatest of miracles; and these results no one can deny. In less than three centuries from the death of the Messiah, Christianity obtained the empire of the world, and had upon the throne an emperor who acknowledged its claims; and in the first century, by the labors of the Apostles, the commission they received was fully and legitimately acted upon. Not more certainly can the Nile, the Euphrates, the Danube, the Mississippi, be traced to their sources, than that Christianity and the churches founded by the Apostles, can be traced to these men.

The monuments of their success have stood for centuries, and will stand to the end of time; like the Osistarsen, still bearing his name; or

the great temple of Karnac built in the days of Theban splendor; the pyramids of Ghizer, on the confines of the Lybian desert; or the Sphinx amid the waving sands which conceal its base, like some preadamite monarch amid the desolations of ages; or the ruins of Thebes, of Luxor, and the Memnonium; just as these hoary relics of the past connect themselves with once living men, with mighty monarchs, and proud dynasties, now perished forever; so Christianity, through the long ages of its existence, stands like a pillar amidst the ruin of kingdoms and empires, bearing upon it the names of the twelve Apostles, and the records of the great facts which they announced, and the wonders they achieved.

The well attested facts thus brought into juxtaposition, show that their concurrent testimony cannot be equivocal; and while it is true that "circumstances cannot lie," those who relate them may: hence it is all important that the facts which constitute the circumstances should be verified, and this we have done; and when thus verified, the inevitable deductions from them are entitled to just as much confidence as if they were proved by direct testimony, or we ousrelves had been eye-witnesses of them.

It often happens that the most important testimony is purely incidental. It may not have

been designed to prove the points at issue. Such testimony has the advantage of being unsuspected—it could not have been made by design; and it is deserving of great weight and consideration; and to this testimony we have appealed.

It is true that the Bible does not need this cumulative evidence to support its divinity; as every argument must primarily be subjected to the test of that evidence on which it is based; and of this suitable proof, the scriptures have quite enough to satisfy any mind. Its evidences, like the trees of the forest, have the seed within themselves. The sun has no need for a witness to declare to all eyes its light, or nature a voice to reveal its Creator. Christianity, as it came out of the hands of its Author, is its own witness, and needs no attestations from without; it does not, however, reject the humblest testimony, but like its Author, admits the "mouths of babes and sucklings" to chant its praises; and if men be silent, the very stones of the street would cry aloud in its behalf.

We have seen that from the day of Pentecost, when the number of converts consisted of 120, the Christian religion rapidly increased and continued its triumphs till it sat upon the throne in the days of Constantine. Its first offering of 3000 souls was the pledge of its wonderful suc-

cess. They soon increased to 5000 ; and shortly after were numbered by myriads ; multitudes, both men and women, became its converts, and the Lord added, daily, " the saved" to the church of the Redeemer. It spread throughout the Roman empire and entered into Great Britain, and even Parthia and India. Pagan temples were deserted, their altars overthrown, and no purchasers found for their victims. Not only the larger cities and towns, but the open country was seized upon. No nation or tribe, no land then known, was unvisited by the heralds of salvation, from the polished Greek to the rude barbarian, until, in the third century, Christians were more numerous than the pagans. Has anything like this happened since ? Is it not without a parallel in the history of the world ? It is clear, to a demonstration, that the Gospel, which won such triumphs in the hands of the Apostles, must have been divine ; and that it was preached with the Holy Spirit sent down from heaven, in the " signs and wonders and powers " which attended its heavenly origin. In less than a century it pervaded Syria and Libya, Egypt and Arabia, Persia and Mesopotamia, Armenia and Parthia, the whole of Asia Minor, and no small part of Northern Europe. Without the secular arm to defend it, without the aid of priests or philoso-

phers, but in opposition to their combined and united forces, it achieved the conquest of the globe.

We need no stronger evidence of its supernatural origin and aid, than the results which followed its first exhibition. The independent testimonies to which we have appealed, and the history of the world for eighteen centuries past, is a witness for its truth.

The Gospel! the Gospel! the wonder of ages! the theme of the Apostles and prophets! the revelation of infinite wisdom and love! the offspring of mercy and kindness to our race. It speaks the highest thoughts of God to man, and reveals the innermost thoughts of man to his Maker: it speaks of the grace and philanthropy of the Father of spirits; of the fall of man, and his recovery; of the cross and the crown; of the soul's immortality and the resurrection to eternal life of the bodies of men. Mighty river of thought! beginning in the mountains of Judea and flowing onward through the centuries which are past, it fertilizes and refreshes all that it touches; the wilderness and the solitary places are made glad for its approach. The thirsty and the weary drink of its waters and are refreshed! The despondent and the sorrowful take hope amid "the sands of time," and press onward to the

grave and to the life beyond. Move on thou mighty river, deepening and widening thy resistless tide, making glad the earth and the city of our God! Commerce and trade, the ships of every sea and the products of every clime, are on thy waters; and the hopes of a world are launched upon thy waves. Roll on, till the great Ocean is reached to which thou art tending; and it will yet be seen that humanity is rich in the inheritance of this great treasure.

We commend to the reader this heaven-descended religion. We unite our voice with the ten thousand voices of the past; with the more silent and solemn utterances of the patriarchs; with Abel at the altar, with Enoch before the flood; with Noah, a preacher of righteousness: with Abraham, "the friend of God;" with Isaac, who was "heir of the promises;" with Jacob, who spoke to his sons of the "coming Shiloh;" with Moses, who "talked with God;" with Samuel and all the prophets, who spake "of the sufferings of the Messiah, and the glory that should follow;" with John the Baptist, who summoned attention to "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world;" with the Apostles, who were "eye-witnesses of his majesty," and the ambassadors of his kingdom; with all these we would urge you TO HEAR HIM, and to

submit to his reign—the Anointed Lord of heaven and earth; "the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star." "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

THE END.